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Winter Meditations

DIRECTIONS

How to employ the *Lisure* of the

W I N T E R

For the Glory of GOD.

Accompanied with Reflections, as well *Historical*,
as *Theological*, not only upon the
Circumstances of the

Winter,

But also, upon the Notable Works of GOD,
Both in,

Creation, and Providence:

Especially those, which more immediately Concern every Particular Man, in the whole course of his Life :

And upon the Religious Works, wherewith every Man should acknowledge GOD, in and from the Accidents of the **W I N T E R**.

By **Cotton Mather.**

With a Preface of the Reverend,
Mr. *John Higginson.*

Boston Printed and Sold by *Benj. Harris*, over
against the Old-Meeting-House. 1693.



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To the Right VWorshipful Sir JOHN HARTOP,

Knight and Baronet.

SIR,

When the Sons of the Patriarch, were Travelling into that Country which was the *Garden* of the World, he ordered them, *To take of the best of the Fruits of the Land, and carry a present unto a Great Person there.* 'Tis into the *Paradise* of the *European* World, that a Little Book is now Travelling over the *Atlantic Ocean* ;

Hei mibi, quod Dominus, non licet ire suo !

And tho' it carry not of the *best of the Fruits of the Land* ; for it may without wrong to Me, be told you, that many parts of the *Land* afford far better ; yet the *Fruits* which it carries, have this Rarity to Recommend them, *That they grew in the midst of the barren Winter* ; but considering with my self, to whom I should make a *present* of these *Fruits*, the Character which *YOU* have among the Reformed Churches of God, a thousand Leagues distant from the Island of your *Abode*, presently determined this *DEDICATION*.

Might we in this *American Wilderness*, more enjoy the *Presence*, as I hope we cannot but enjoy

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the

the *Good Will* of persons, like You, Accomplished, we should have a Compensation made us, for all the desperate Hardships of our Winters; but in the mean time we will Invite you to partake with us in our WINTER MEDITATIONS, when we cannot have you to partake with us in our Winter Difficulties.

Altho' the Lines are fallen to You, in the Pleasant Places, of a more Temperate Climate, yet the White Mantle of Snow at *some* Times covering that Happy Island also, bespeaks for it the old Name of *Aibion*; and if at *such* Times, the Lessons which then we have here had at our Fingers Ends, may give You as Acceptable an Entertainment as they would a Seasonable One, my Satisfactions will even make me forget the Time of the Year.

A most Excellent Pen, long since did publickly describe You, as a Person, who were by Your Faith *In Cacumine Olympi constitutus, supra Ventos et Processos*; above the *Blasts* and *Storms* of this *Unquiet* World. But, I perswadè my self, that a Treatise produced in the Months, that are full of Natural *Blasts* and *Storms*, will have in it nothing Disagreeable to that Serenity of Soul, wherein Your Faith has placed You.

The Day comes on apace, when the World which was once *Drowned, propter Ardorem Libidinis*, will now be *Burned, propter Teorem Charyatis*. I have here made for a few of my Friends, an *Essay, To fetch out one Cold by another*; and albeit it would not be easie for to find *All* that should *Less Need the Aunctionions* of this

Essay

Essay than You, yet, I believe, that Few will Receive it with so much Candor, Goodness, and Kind Resentment.

A Renowned Person once got himself an Immortal Surname, only by an Invention, to come fairly at a Common Enemy, over and thorough Interposing *Snow-drifts*. I am here endeavouring to help my Neighbours with an Invention how they may Encounter their Spiritual Enemies, the *Flesh*, the *World*, and the *Devil*, not only *In*, but even *By*, the circumstances, when God, *Says to the Snow*, *Be thou upon upon the Earth*. By this Undertaking, I have neither Pursued, nor Deserved, any further Name for my self; and yet I am upon this Occasion ambitious, to Earn and Wear that Name of,

Sir,

Your most Sincere and
Very Humble Servant,

COTTON MATHER.

TO THE

READER.

IT is one of the Heavenly Counsels of Aged
Part to Young People, which reacheth to
all Ministers and Christians in all Ages.

[1 Tim. 4. 7.] *Exercise thy self unto Godliness.*
Now that is done by a frequent practice of those
Duties, which have a Tendency to the promoting
of the Power of Godliness, in our selves and o-
thers; and which through the Blessing of God,
will not fail to attain that End: amongst which
there are none more useful than *Meditation*, *Self-
Examination* and *Secret Prayer*: These are not only
Enjoyned by the *World*, but Confirmed by the
Experiencie of all the Saints, bearing witness to this
great Truth, that there is no maintaining the Life
and Power of Godliness without a diligent practice
and frequent Exercise of the fore named Holy
Duties; and therefore any Contribution of help
towards any of these, and in particular that of
Meditation, deserveth a thankful acceptance from
all the People of God.

The Object of *Meditation* [*God revealing him-
self in his Word and Works*] is of a large Extent;
the particularizing of some of the *Works*
of God in *Creation* and *Providence*, considered
with

To the R E A D E R.

with the adjunct of *Time* wherein they do Exist, and Expressing what the Word says of those *Works* in their *Times* and *Seasons*, is of singular use to fix the Volatile and Voluble Mind of Man unto profitable *Meditations* with Application to our selves: as a Godly Man once said, *Show me any* *Concurrence*, *and I will shew thee God.*

The *Works* of God in their general Nature, and special kinds, are the proper Subject of Natural Philosophy; for *Physica est Ars bene Naturandas*; *Natura est res nata ex priuissimis: Principium est Materiale & Formale*; i. e. the Material and Formal Causes do constitute the Nature, and make up the *Essence* of every Creature of God in it self considered: but the same Creatures & Works considered in relation to the Supream Efficient and Final Cause, as they are from God as their *First Cause*, and for God as their *Last End*, so they belong to *Theology*, and so the Holy Scripture doth abundantly treat of them, shewing Gods Efficiency running through, and influencing all Second and Subordinate Causes, and entring into every Effect: and then the same Efficiency preserving the Being and Power of Working in all the Creatures, & directing all their Motions thorough all & above all their next *Interior Ends*, to God himself as the last End of all; Hence every Creature hath its Existence and Operations, as it is *Ex a primo ad Primum*; and thus the Holy Scriptures do every where proclaim God as the *First* and the *Last*, *Isa. 44. 1. Rev. 1.* in relation to all the Creatures; for *of him, and through him, and to him*

To the Reader.

Are all things, unto whom be Glory for ever, Amen.
Rom. 11. 36.

It is further observable, the Scripture doth not only treat of the Works of God themselves, but of the Circumstance of Time; not merely as *Time is Fluxus Nunc*, or *duratio rerum*, but as its under a Divine Predetermination of the Seasons of Time wherein every Creature doth Exist, and every Event shall come to pass; and therefore it informs us, *Acts 17. 26.* That, *God hath determined the Times appointed before*, and that, *Eccles. 3. 1.* *To every thing there is a Season, and a time to every purpose under Heaven*; and the Psalmist speaking to God, says, *Psal. 74. 16, 17.* *Thou hast made the Summer and the Winter, the Day is thine and the night also is thine: and Moses the Man of God tells us that Seed time, and Harvest, Summer and Winter, and Day and Night shall not cease, until the end of the World, Gen. 8. last.* In all which Expressions we are to understand, the Works of God that are done, and the Events of Providence that come to pass in the Appointed Times and Seasons of the Year; as now, In the Winter time, *Job 37. 6, 7.* *God seals up the hand of every man, that all men may know his Work.* In the Spring time he *Renews the Face of the Earth*, *Psal. 104. 30.* and revives all the Creatures. In the Summer time he *Cloathes the Earth in its best Array*, and gives the *Fruitful Seasons*; *Mat. 6. 30.* *Acts 14. 17.* and then in the Autumn he *Crowns the Year with his Goodness*, *Psal. 65. 11.* and brings in the *Joy of the Harvest*, *Isa. 9. 3.* Nay the Psalmist further informs us, that

Day

To the Reader.

Day unto Day uttereth Speech, and Night unto Night sheweth Knowledge, Psal. 19. 2. implying the various passages of Providence in every day and night of all the Seasons of the Year, are such as give Instruction to us in the Knowldg of that God who Made all, and Rules all, and will Judge us all at the Last Day, when all the Works of Creation & Providence shall come to an end, & when Time (that was Concreated with them) shall be no more : then God himself shall be *all in all*, 1 Cor. 15. 28. World without End.

Now in all the forementioned respects, this present pious and ingenious Treatise doth recommend it self to every Intelligent Reader, as a singular & seasonable help to Improve the time of the Winter Season in such an Exercise of Godliness, as directeth us how to observe the *Works* of God therein, & to acknowledge God in them, & by comparing the *Word* and *Works* of God together to have suitable (either sett or occasional) *Meditations* on the Wisdom & Power, the Greatness & Goodness of God, and this with Application to our selves, and our own Duties, so as to raise our hearts and affections to the Fear and Love & Service of that God, who is God over all blessed for evermore. Upon which Ground I cannot forbear wishing that the Reverend *Author* of this, would do the like in relation to the other three Seasons of the Year ; being assured that the Holy Scriptures are as rich in furnishing Materials for Spiritual Meditations on the *Works* of God proper to the *Spring*, the *Summer* and the *Autumn*, as well as to the *Winter*-time.

And

To the Reader.

And truly, I cannot but give thanks to God, and Congratulate our New-England, that He hath Raised up such a Learned, Pious, and Ingenuous Person amongst the Ministers of our Third Generation, and hath poured out his Spirit upon him, and hath Enabled him not only to an Exemplary Diligence in the Work of the Ministry both publickly and privately amongst his Own People with great Succes; but also to Write so many Useful Treatises on several Subjects, relating to the great Concernments of the Souls of all men, and of the State of Religion amongst us at this day; which I doubt not but they have been, are and will be acceptable and profitable to the good people of this Generation, and those that shall succeed.

Finally, my hearts desire and Prayer to God is that he would graciously preserve the Life and Health of this his Laborious and Faithful Servant, and give him to be Strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus, and Enable him to Write many more such Useful Treatises as he hath done already, for the Glory of God and good of the Souls of men; and that the Blessing of Heaven may go along with this present Work, and make it Effectual to attain the good Ends thereof.

Salem Octob. 5.

1693.

John Higginson

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T H E

Introduction

IT is the Description, which *Martinius* in that Noble and Learned piece of *Geography*, which he calls *Atlas Chinensis*, gives concerning the Air in that part of the Eastern World, *Majus in hac Provincia Frigus est, quam illius poscas Pots Altitudo*: Says he, *The Cold in China, is greater than the Elevation of the Pole there would seem to allow: for the Country lies in little more than Forty Degrees of Latitude, and yet for four Months together in the Year, the Rivers there are so Frozen, that the Ice will bear the passage not only of Men, but of Horses and Coaches too, upon it. Yea, and the Ships are so shut up in their Harbours, that unto the beginning of March, there is hardly any stirring out; and there is more Froze in one day than there can be Thaw'd in many.* I almost Thought that I read the Description of our Winters in this part of our Western World, in those words of the Geographer: for tho' the *Latitude* of the principal Town in this Province be but *Forty Two Degrees, Twenty Seven Minutes*, yet our Cold is by many Degrees more Fierce and Hard, however more clear, pleasant and wholesome than

that of many places that ly beyond ~~Five~~ and when it shall be told unto Strangers, that we have had *Frosts*, both in *June* and in *August*, they will also conclude, That our *Winters* must needs be as *Long*, as they are *Cold*. Now, the pinches of ~~such~~ a *New English Winter*, Awakened me to Consider, How so *Cold* and so *Long* a Time of Liverision from very much of our other Busines, might be best Employ'd for the Glory of that *God*, who *Made both the Summer and the Winter*? As, 'Tis the manner of an Ingenious Person, when in the Morning, there was a prospect of a *Fair Day*, to say, 'Tis pitty such a *Fair Day*, should be *Lost* : so, The most of our *Winter Days* are *Fair ones*; not such *Dirty*, *Slappy*, *Lowing* *Things*, as fill the *Winters*, in some other *Lands*; and methoughts, 'Twas pitty any of them should be *Lost*, as too many of them are. I am sufficiently satisfisified at the ordinary Definition, which the Schools have given of the *Cold*, a *Quality* that *Congregates* *Things* both *a like*, and *an unlike* *Nature*. Yet I have been far more di *latory'd*, at the too usual way of spending our *Days*, when the *Cold* almost confines us from our *Christian Congregations*. But what seem'd the best way of Redeeming these *Days*? Truly, I was willing to Try, not only whether there could not be found many *proper Works* to be attended with a singular convenience in the *Winter*, but also, whether the Accidents of the *Winter* is *so*, might not afford something to *Assist us*, and *Quicken us*, in those *Works*. There are certain *Flens*, which keep *Green*, all the *Year*,

The Introduction.

per Long; and thought i, why should not Iendeavour, that the Exercises of Devotion, might so do, both in my self and others, who desire to be, *As Green Olive-Trees in the House of our God?* The Winter has been sometimes called, *Hems Iners*, the *Anglysh Winter*; but, I would contribute what I can, that it may be, *Hems Sancra*, the *Pious Winter*, the *Holy Winter*, the *Uxial Winter*; a Winter devoted unto the Works of the God of Heaven. To Sleep all Winter, more befits a *Bear*, than a *Man*, and much more than a *Saint*. It is very certain, That there is more Time contained in a *Natural Day* of the *Winter*, than there is in a *Natural Day* of the *Summer*: for, the Sun in its Annual Motion from the West unto the East, thro' the *Zodiac*, passeth equal Arches in unequal Times: the *Winter* Half Year of the Sun's passing from *Libra* to *Aries* is but an Hundred and Seventy *Eight* Days, whereas the *Summer* Half Year of his passing from *Aries* to *Libra*, is no less than an *Hundred and Eighty Seven* Days: the Sun is Nine Days more in passing through the *Semi-Ecliptick* of the *Summer*, than he is thro' that of the *Winter*; and accordingly an Hour upon the *Sundial*, when the Sun is inclining to the *Winter Tropic*, is longer than an Hour upon the *Dial*, when he is advancing near the *Summer Tropic*. Heretofore, I could not but make that Reflection, If there be more, that it scarce be sensibly more, Time in a Day now, than at other Times in the Year, why should I do less work for God, for Christ, for His People now, than at other Times? and as an effect of

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that Reflection, Behold, Reader, some of my
WINTFR-MEDITATIONS.

‘Tis, as I remember, *Polydore Virgil* who relates, that when *Mathildis* was, during the Depth of Winter, straitly Besieged, in *Oxford*, She arrayed her self and her followers all in white, the colour of the *Snow* upon the Ground, and by the Advantage of that Colour escaped thro’ the Besiegers unto a place of Safety. That which I desire, is, a free passage for the *Truths*, and the *Ways*, and the *Werks* of God, into the minds of my Neighbours; and I have therefore taken the Advantage of putting a *Winter Complexion* upon them; I have Clothed them in the Colours of the *Winter*. And in this ESSAY, I have after a sort Moralized the Fable of *Antiphanes*, That there is in a certain *Scyrian* Region such a Frost, that the *Wards* uttered in the *Winter* there Congele so as to be not heard until the *Summer* following shall dissolve them: for ‘twas at *Boston-Lecture*, in the Month of *December* last, that the Heads of these *Winter-Meditations*, were first *Preach’d*; and it is now in the Month of *November* following that they are *Printed*, on the same Designs of *Religion*, that gave them their Original.

When the Excellent *Bartholinus*, published his Book, *De Usu Nicis*, it was accompany’d with an Epigram, something to this purpose,

*Libros Authoris, quicunq; recenset et Amos,
Amos quo poserit, tot Numerare Libros.*

Tis

The Introduction.

"Tis possible, that now I am Composing my Book about, *The Use of the Winter*, I may find my self obliged to contels unto the World, as a Great Fault, what was indeed counted None at all in that Incomparable Person ! I do confess, That I have written too many Books, for one of my small Attainments ; and I would say to my Reader, whom I now suppose by the Fire-side, If this or any Book of mine, hinder men from acquainting themselves with the Bible, that Book of God, I wish, as Luther in that case did about his own Books, *That they were all thrown into the Fire*. But I hope, it will be otherwise ; whereto I would also add, That all that Weariness of the Flesh, as well as the various and humbling Temptation otherwise, which I have undergone, in the Study of, Writing many Books, has been abundantly Recompenced, by the comfort of thinking, That the Free Grace of my Good God, will Accept of my poor Thoughts, to be Serviceable unto the Interests of His Kingdom in the World. And now I am Appendicing unto all the rest, one Book upon the Winter, I will not say as my newly mentioned *Bartholomus* did in the Preface of his, *Ego quidem ex hoc Niveo labore, preter Atram Invidiam nihil Exspecto*, Or, That I expect nothing, but only to be Frost-bitten with Envy for what I do. 'Tis true, There is a Foward Generation in every place, whose Calumnies must Persecute all that Serve the Publick ; and I have had the Experience of both my Fathers as well as my own, to convince me, that this place has of those Fowards in it. If this People

would

The Introduction.

could have had Greater, which I know not, yet all mankind will shortly know, That it was impossible for any People to have *Truer, Juster, and more Indefatigable Servants*, than some with whom I have the Honour to be well acquainted, have been to *This*: but the monstrous *Detraction*, that have attended *Them*, have Taught *Me*, That I also must, *Bene Agere, et Male Audire*, If I will, *It*; if I will Do *VVel*; and it will indeed be at first found, that unto all Activity in well disposed Actions for the Publick Weal, the *Spirit* of *Amen* self, is not a greater *Freerer*, than *Deut. 32:18* Usages. Neverthelets, I am to *Obey* as I *am* to think, That this is the *Spirit* of *It*; a *Prayer*; of at least, That there are multitudes among us, who when any Service is done for *them*, do hardly give *Thanks* to *God* for *it*, and who kindly Rebent the *Zeal* with which they *may* see Almighty *God* inspiring of any to be Labouring for their *Good*. For the sake of *such*, none of our Thoughts, none of our Cares, none of our *Worries*, are too much; and it is unto *such*, That *These of Mine* are now humbly offered.

WINTER.

Winter-Meditations.

It is Written in,

JOB XXXVII. VI, VII.

*He saith to the Snow, be thou upon the Earth; like-
wise to the Small Rain, & to the great Rain of His
Strength.*

*He Searcheth up the Hand of every Man, that all
Men may know his Work.*

That most Laborious and most Im-
itable Minister of the Gospel, the
Apostle *Paul*, after he had been
Travelling on the Designs of the
Gospel all the *Summer* long, had
some affairs of the Gospel to ma-
nage in the *Winter* too. Speaking about a City
of *Thrace*, he said, in *Tit. 3. 12.* *I have determined*
there to winter: and accordingly in the *Acts* of the
Apostles, we find it is famous *Doctor of the Gentiles*
spent a whole three months in *Greece*, after he had gi-
ven much *Exhortation* to the People as he went a-
long. It seems the *Service* of the Lord *Jesus*
Christ,

Winter Meditations.

Christ, and of His Gospel, was not in the *Three Months of the Winter*, to be laid aside.

As for Us, we are now getting into our *Winter-Quarters*, and we ought not only to continue our Cares about *Religion, & Salvation* and all the Works of the *Gospel*, all the *Winter* long; but there are some singular Lessons of the *Gospel* to be in these *Winter Months* inculcated and entertained. Indeed, there is not *One Day* in the Year, whereon we should not be, *In the fear of the Lord all the Day long*; but there are diverse *Months* in the Year, wherein the *Fear of God* is to single out some special ways of Exercise.

That there are *Special Duties* of *Christianity*, belonging to the *winter*, is intimated, in the words now Read unto us; and it is also intimated, *what* those *Christian Duties* are. Tis likely that the *winter* should advance any further upon us, before we have had some discourse of these *Duties*: To be minding one another of these things, would be more Significant, and more Profitable, than our impertinent expence of time, in telling one another *That it is very Cold.*

Tis possible that your Devotions here in this *winter-season*, put you upon some Trial of your Patience. But I have an occasion here to tell you; You have heard of the Patience of *JOB*. He was a Person of Quality, who dwelt in *Arabia the Desert*, and yet that *Arabia* could not but be *the Happy* while it enjoyed the Presence of such a Ruler. But what a manifold *Unhappiness* overtook this *Excellent* person, an *Unhappiness* wherein he fell at once

from great Wealth and Health into Miseries that have made a *Proverb*, all Ages have since heard, with wonderment. In these his Miseries, he was visited by some of his *Comfortable Neighbours*, who yet proved but *Miserable Comforters*. Among these Visitants there were *Three* more Aged *Men of God*, which Venerable Saints, all took their Turns, in dealing with him, about his Condition before the Lord ; but at length it came to the Turn of a *Fourth*, who tho' he were a Younger Person, yet stood something longer than the rest in the Disputation.

This *Elihu*, for *That* was his Name, is in our Context proving, *That* as there is a most Inscrutable and Unblemished *Wisdom*, in all the Works of God, so in the Afflictions which the Lord had now sent upon *Job*, there was nothing to be at all complained of. Whatever is done by our Great God, either in the Great World, or to the Little World, we have cause to say, *He hath done ALL Things WELL* : and there is no Work of God, whereof, all Circumstances considered, we have not cause to own, *His Work is perfect*. Nothing in the World could be more arrogant than the Speech uttered by the King of *arragon*, *That he could have contrived a better shaped World* ; nor more worthy to be Rebuked with such Burning Thunderbolts as the *Spanish* Authors tell us, broughte that haughty Monarch unto Repentance. But among those *Excellent Works*, of the God who is, *Excellens in working*, such Works as are every *Wor-*

ter to be seen, have a Remark most particularly here set upon them.

In our Text, First, We have some *Accidents* of the *Winter*. *He saith to the Snow, Be thou on the Earth*; *Likewise to the Small Rain, and to the Great Rain of His Strength*. In the *Winter*, we have plenty of *Snow* and *Rain*; and those Notable Productions of the *Meteorous Kingdom*, as they come from the *Word*, so they shew forth the *Strength* of our God. Not only such *Snows* as those that fall upon *Caucasus*, whereof such is the Quantity, that *Strabo* tells us, whole Regiments of Men have perished, therein overwhelmed: but the ordinary *Snows* of every *Winter*; Not only such *Rains* as those that fall near *Mexico*, whereof *Johnson* reports, that sometimes the *Drops* are so big and fierce as to kill the very people with their fury; but the ordinary *Rains* of every *Winter*; these have much of God, appearing in them. And one thing therein done by our God, is this:

[*He seals up the Hand of every man*] That is, By bad Weather he binds up their *Hands*, from doing any Work abroad. But indeed, there are more than those who work chiefly with their *Hands*, that feel these Obstructions of the *Winter*. Wherefore the French Version so carrys it, *Il fait que chacun se Renferme*; that is, Then he makes every man shut himself up; and it is very Expressive.

There is an impious Interpretation that some have made of these words; as if being, *to ma-*

nu · *Omnium Hominum signa posuit*, they countenanced, Chiromancy; a foolish and absurd Science, which pretends from the *Lines* in our *Hands*, to read the *Fates* of our *Lives*. As for that curious Vanity, I shall say but thus much of it; The *Lines* in our *Hands*, are mostly formed, by the Accidental *Uses* and *Motions* of our *Hands*; and may accordingly, by the like means be altered. Opinions about our future Circumstances and Contingencies, cannot be drawn to any purpose from these *Lines*, unless they be done mee-ly by *Impulse*; and the *Impulse*, which has often darted many true *Predictions* into the Minds of Ungodly *Fortune tellers*, when they have been poing on the *Hands* of others, is ordinarily from some of the *Demons*, who are *at Hand* always to Encourage such Impieties; and of the *Predictions* which the *Demons* have thus perhaps litt upon, but as probable *Conjectures*, they immediately Employ all their Interest, which in *This world* is very great, for the Accomplishment. Of the Line *Vengeance*, leaving such wretched *Fortune tellers* unto the more than ordinary power of the *Devil*, we have in our own Land, lately seen molt horrid Instances. Away then, with all such *Diabolical Companions*! Let us with a Christian Resignation, wait upon God, in a willing and a wtolome Ignorance of, *The Secret Things which belong unto the Lord*.

But then, Secondly, we have some *Employments* for the *Winter*. Men are Seal'd, from their work when the *Winter* comes. But what? Have they

no work then to mind? Yes; All men are then to know his work. To *Know* that work, is, according to the import and Fulness of the Hebrew Phrase to *Learn* the work, to *Love* the work, to *Do* the Work. Why? The work is Gods work; the Work that God would have to be known, and therefore most worthy to be known.

Well; There is an Important CASE, wherewith I would hence take occasion to give you some WINTER ENTERAINMENTS. It is

The CASE.

What Special Works for the Glory of God, may and shall be exercized by the Children of Men, when by the hard weather of the Winter, He shuts them up, or Hinders them from their Ordinary Businesses?

They are not only *Commoda*, or Profitable Things, but also *Accommoda*, or Seasonable Things which are to be Preached among you. Our Winter is our *Lisure*, and as it will be a Profitable, lo'tis but a *Seasonable* Undertaking, to Lay before you, *How the Lisure of the Winter may be most Improved for the Glory of God.*

Now, without any further Preface, First, that we may speak more Negatively, it is to be asserted, That the *Lisure* of the Winter must not be abated, as if it were a *Lisure to work Abominations*, or as if it were a *Lisure for any Superstitious or Prohibited Sensualities*. 'Tis not in the Slothful and Frothy

Frothy Diversions of Bad Company, nor in things which will *wrong our Souls*, that our Winter is to be Sweeted away. I am sure, The Abominable Works of Sin, are none of thole *works*, which we are to mind, when God *shuts up our Hands*; No, we should keep our own *Hands* for ever *shut up* from such *works* as those. Indeed, we spend the Nights of our Winter *as a Tale that is told*; but we should not spend them in such Idle Things, as the *Telling of Tales*; nor, should we give caule for a poor *Tale* to be told, about our way of spending them. Tho' our *Winter-Days* have not so much *Light* as *Darkness* in them, yet we should all the Winter long behave our selves as the *Children of Light*, and have no *Fellowship with the Un-fruitful Works of Darkness*. 'Tis the Advice of the Apostle, in Rom. 13. 12, 13, 14. *The Night is far spent, the Day is at Hand; Let us walk Honestly, as in the Day; not in Dancing and Drunkenness; not in Chambering and Wantonness; not in Strife and Envying.* But put you on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not Provision for the Flesh. Even thus, when the *Nights* come to be Longer than the *Days*; we should still do nothing but what the *Day-Light* of the Gospel Judices; 'tis not the *Fire of Lust, or of Wrath*, wherewith we are then to keep our selves in an *Heat*; whatever *Winter Garments* we get, we must not forget to *Put on the Lord Jesus Christ*, that is, to have such a Conversation as that every one who sees us, may therein behold an *Imitation* of the Lord Jesus Christ; whatever *Winter-Provisions* we Lay in, there must be no *Provisions*

Provisions for the Flesh, or Gratifications of our sinful Appetites, among them all. Briefly, what is *Honesty* Gained in the Summer, must be but *Soberly* Spent in the Winter.

There was one *Winter Month* in the Year, which was call'd *Mensis Genitius*, or the Frisk-some and Voluptuous Month, among the Ancient Pagans; it was the Month of **DECEMBER**, wherein the Heathen had their *Saturnalia* Jollies. Then 'twas that they sent their *Presents* one unto another, which our Primitive Authors call by the Name of *Saturnalia*, and by the Name of *Saturnium Sportus*, but they also had monstrous *Revels* among them, whereto *Horace* refers, when he says, *Age libertate Decembri.* None shall take Offence at me, for my giving of my own Judg-
ment upon this matte; but I hope, I may without offence Report the Sentiments of the Great *Hispinius*, who says, He did believe, that they who observed the feast of our *Lords Nativity*, in the latter end of *December*, did it not as thinking that our Lord was born in that Month; but because the *Saturnalia* were then kept in *Rome*, and they were willing to have those Pagan Holidayes Metamorphosed into *Christian*. And I hope, 'twill be no offence for me to recite the Expressions of *Tertullian*, who in his Book against Idoltry, thus Expresseth himself; *Shall we Christians, who have nothing to do with the Festivals of the Jews, which were once of Divine institution, Embrace the Saturnalia and the Januaria of the Heathen? How are we shamed by the Gentiles, who are more true to their Religion.*

ligion than we are to ours? None of them will observe the Lord's Day, lest they shoul be Christians; and shal not we then, by observing their Festivals, fear lest we be made Ethnicks! Nor will I enter into any dispute, Whether the Birth of Our Lord were in December; tho' they that are versed in Antiquity, do understand how divided the Ancients were about it; and how late, yea, how many Hundreds of Years, it was ere the December Festival could obtain: and how much more probability there is, that it rather fell out, about the time of the Feast of Tabernacles, about the conclusion of September, or the beginning of October. But I will venture to say thus much, That it is well if the World be mended, since the famous and pious Bishop made his Complaint *That men dishonour the Lord Jesus Christ more in the Twelve Days of CHRISTMAS, than in all the Twelve Months of the Year beside.* And I will venture to say this more, That when the Corinthians pray'd the Apostle, to answer that Question, *Whether they might so be witt, as to do like, the Pagans in those Idolatrous Festivities?* He plainly told them, No! Deterring of them, with the Example of Israel in the Wildernets, who wold keep a Feast in Honour of the true God, but yet follow'd the Egyptians, who in Commemoration of Joseph, saving them from Death by Expounding a Dream at Nine, had a sort of Over-Worship among them: It is laid, *The People sat down to Eat and Drink, and Rose up to play;* and all the World has heard, what the Reckoning was!

But if the mispence of the Winter in Excesses,

of Eating and of Drinking, do deserve a Caution, why shou'd not the *Mispence* of the Winter in GAMING, do so too? Especially the Games of *pure Lot*, whereof thus much at least may be mentioned, *That it is best for all Christians to abstain from them.* Altho' moderate Recreations in the Winter, are more than a little *Healthful* and *Useful*, yet there are some Recreations too much used in the Winter, which in Truth are never convenient; such are the Games of CARDS, & DICE, and those which have nothing but CHANCE to manage them. A *Lot* is a solemn Appeal unto the God of Heaven; and hence to play with it, seems to break the Third Commandment in the Laws of our God. *Injury Lots* are by Great and Grave Divines Esteemed Unlawful, on the same Score that, as our worthy *Merton*, in his *Rebuke to the Gaming Humour* well Expresses it, *It would be an Abomination unto any Christian, to see a Pulpit, a Communion-Table, a Font, Expos'd on a Stage, or the Gestures of Worship siped by Players.* In every *Lot*, an *Affair* is wholly committed unto a Superior Cause than either *Nature*, or *Art*, & *Skill*; and this is a Thing to be done rather *Prayerfully* than *Sportfully*; even the Rudest Gentiles have counted a *Lot*, *A Sacred Thing.* The *Papists* themselves, will not allow of these Games in Ecclesiastical Persons; and the *Fathers* Reproved them with a vehement Zeal, in all manner of Persons. When the Roman Empire became Christian, severe Edicts were made against these Games; and what Christians are we then that practice

practise them. Our Protestant Reformers have branded these Games with an Infamous Character; yea, *Tully* the Orator himself, could produce it, as a Reproach unto some Ill men, that they were given to these Games. For which cause He that will follow, *Whatev're Things are of Good Report*, will not meddle with such Infamous Things as these. In every Indenture for an Apprentice these words are usual, *At Cards, Dice, or any other Unlawful and Prohibited Games, be shal not Play.* And shall we that are by *Covenant*, the Bound Servants of the Lord Jesus Christ, offer to Play at *Games*, that have been so stigmatized? This however, you may be free of; There is a Truth in that Observation, *That all the money got by these Games, is Like the Goods of them which Dy of the Plague, which commonly bring a Pest with them.* Nor is it altogether unworthy to be considered, *That the more special Successes of your surger Gamesters* (wherupon even some of Themselves do sometimes profanely say, *The Devil will make a Gamester of that Young Man!*) do very terribly intimate a peculiar Interest of the Devil in Ruling the Chance of these Games; 'tis an Observation which my most Honoured Friend, the Venerable *Baxter*, has made in the close of his Book, about, *The Worlds of Spirits.* Pray then, have a care!

And if men may Sin by some sorts of *Gaming* in the *Winter*, mayn't they do it in some kinds of *READING* too? Not only Books of *Debauching Feste and Songs*, are very unworthy to be

our WINTER-ENTERTAINMENTS, but the most of Romances too will then but create a *Wast of Time*, to be Repented of. And here also, that I may not Impose my own Opinion, I shall give you the Judgment of two Writers, whom the World have not accounted Inconsiderable. The One is, The Author of, *The whole Duty of Man*; who Dehorting of Young Women from the Reading of Romances, has these words, *'Tis very difficult to Imagine what vast mischief is done to the World by the false Notions and Images of things, particularly of Love and Honour, those Nobler Concerns of Humane Life, represented in those Mirrors.* The other is, the Incomparable Dr. *Tuckney*; who likewise dissuading of young Students from the Reading of Romances, has these words, *Make this Trial, whether when you have been Greedy in Reading such Books, you have thereby any great mind to Read the Bible. I am sure that when you have been Reading That, you will have as little Delight in Reading them, as Paul had in the Thorn in his Flesh, when he had been before caught up to Paradise.*

All that I shall add, is, That when the Rules of Sobriety and Righteousness and Godliness are Transgressed, Men instead of Knowing the Works of God, are Doing the Works of Gods Great Enemy; And I am sure, The *Winter* is not a *Leisure*, for such Odious *Works*.

But then, *Secondly*; we may speak more POSITIVELY; and it is to be now affirmed, That the *Leisure* of the *Winter* is to be Employ'd, in such Things, as may be called, **A WISE RE-DEEMING**

DEEMING OF THE TIME. It is Enjoyned upon us, in *Eph. 5. 15, 16.* *VWalk circumspectly, nor as Fools, but as VVise, Redeeming the Time, because the Days are Evil.* Thus about the *VVinter*, Because the Days are now short and sharp, therefore Let us now be so wise as to Redeem our Time in these Days. When we have Least to do, we should then be Best Employ'd. About the *Liesure* of the *VVinter*, we must own, *Dous nobis haec Otia fecit*; it is God that has made this *Liesure* for us; and therefore it becomes us to Employ this *Liesure* for God. We never have a *Liesure-Day* betalling us, but we should Eye the *Hand* and *End* of God, in ordering such a Day; and think with our selves; *VVby did my God send me this Day? what would He have me to do this Day?* We are not *VVise*, if on our *VVinter-Days*, all such Thoughts as these Ly Frozen in our Minds.

But, *How is VVinter-Time to be Redeemed?*
We will particularize.

1. In the *VVinter* we have *Liesure*, to Reflect upon **OUR OWN WORKS**; and the God of Heaven does then Expect that we should so Reflect. There are some, who take my Text in that sense; *He Seals up the Hand of every man, that every man may know his own work.* We have *Liesure* in the *Winter* to settle our *Temporal Affairs*, and we may then see whereabout our *Work* lies; what progress, what success, we have had in our *Work*; and what further steps we are to take about our *works*. The *VVinter-time* should accordingly be a

Time of much *Contrivance* with us, and a Time to State our whole Busines, for all the Year about. But more than so ; our *Spiritual* and *Eternal* Affairs are those which the *Winter* gives us the best Leisure for ; and we should now settle those by Reflecting upon our *work*. It was complaines in Jer. 8. 6. *No man Repented him, saying, what have I done ?* In the *Winter* we have Little to Do; well, but now 'tis a Time, for us to Reflect, *What have I been doing ever since I came into the W^{rld}?* The great work of *Self-Examination* is Gods *W^{rk}*; 'tis the *W^{rk}* whereto our God has called us. We have a Precept for it, in Hag. 1. 5. *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, consider your W^{rks}.* We have a Pattern for it, in Piel. 119. 59. *I thought on my Ways, and I turned my Feet unto thy Testimonia.* We do the *W^{rk}* of God, when we thus Try what our own *W^{rks}* have been. When the *Winter* then has driven us into Retirements, Let us take Tyme for this *W^{rk}*; even to *See*, and *Know*, what *W^{rk}* we have been doing since our God first let us to *work* among the Living on the Earth. 'Tis now a Time for us to Enquire, *How have I answered the End, which I came into the W^{rld} upon?* God has Required us, to *work out our own Salvations*; well, but what strokes, have we struck at that *work* all this while? Ask our selves, *How have I done the works Agreeable to Repentance?* and, *How have I done the works of Believing on the Lord Jesus Christ?* And herewithal bring we all our *works* to such an *Examination*, as may discover the

the Errors, and Follies of our Works, in order to our thorough Humiliation for them.

Why should not a *Winter-day* be sometimes made a PRAYING-DAY, yea, and a FASTING-DAY, before the Lord? No man will arrive to very high Attainments in the Grace of God, who does not sometimes, devote whole days unto a secret *Communion* with him. Now, let us have many such Dayes every Winter, to *Pray*, and *Fast*, and Humble our Souls, before the God of Heaven. But on such a Day, one very proper exercise would be for us, to call over the Works of our lives, and finding the Obliquity of our Works by Comparing them with the *Holy, & Just, & Good* Commandments of our God. Let us then, *Judg ourselves that we may not be Judged of the Lord*.

Behold a Catalogue of *sins*, against the Commandments of God; Reflect now distinctly & exactly upon your *works*, and find out, whether you have not had such *sins* in your *works*.

Demand of Yourselves.

QUÆSTION I.

1. Have not I grievously *forgotten* the God that made me? And have not I given to the *World*, the *Flesh*, and the *Devii*, the Homage which is due to God alone? Or, have I not let Creatures have the *Affection*, and *Obedience*, which God alone may lay claim unto?

Quest 2. Have I not Shamefully Neglected the *Institutions* wherein the Lord Jesus Christ has taught me to maintain a *Fellowship* with my God? and have

• have I not humoured the *Superstitions* of a *Vain Conversation*?

Quest. 3. • Have I not Irreverently treated the *Names, Attributes, Works, and Ordinances*, whereby God makes Himself known unto us? and have I not been without awful Apprehensions of His Majesty, under His various *Dispensations*?

Quest. 4. • Have I not been Carnal, Careless, Weary in the *Ordinary Sabbath* of God? and have I not been Indisposed unto the *Extraordinary Ones*?

Quest. 5. • Have I not been Perverse and Haughty towards my *Superiors*? Unkind and Foolish towards my *Intemperances*? Envious towards my *Equals*? and miserably Selfish in my conduct of my self?

Quest. 6. • Have I not Impaired my own *Health* by Intemperancies? or, been towards others, *Passionate, Revengeful, and Contentious*?

Quest. 7. • Have I not been *Uncast* in my Acts, my Thoughts, my Words? Or, been a Companion of the *Fools* that are so?

Quest. 8. • Have I not by *Fraud* nor *Force* wronged my Neighbour? Or, been too *Prodigal*, when I should not have spent; but when I shouald have spent, then too *Niggardly*?

Quest. 9. Have I not uttered, nor fomented what has been contrary unto *Truth*? or given Countenance unto a *False Report*?

Quest. 10. • Have I not been *Discontent* with my

my own Condition ? Or, harboured in my Heart a Roving and a Craving Lust, after an undue Alteration of it ?

Quest. 11. Have not I Despised the Offers of the Lord Jesus Christ in the New-Covenant, and the wonderful provision therein made for unhappy Sinners ? And have not I permitted my Earthly Affairs to keep me at a Distance from the Lord-Redeemer, who has been waiting to give me, *Repentance and Remission of Sins* ?

Quest. 12. Is not the Fountain of all these bitter and cursed Streams, the Corrupt Nature, which I have Derived from my First Parents ? A Nature deprived of the Divine Image, depraved with abominable Inclinations ?

Upon these Articles, Let us Interrogate our selves, concerning our Works ; and thus in a Winter-Affair let us pass a due Judgment upon our selves, for our own miscarriages ; that so we may in the End of the Year, make ready for the Judgment which is to come in the End of the World.

IX. The Great God requires our Contemplation to observe ALL HIS WORKS, and the Leisure of the Winter should very much go to that Contemplation. We should now Know the Work of God, and Study as far as we can, every one of His Works. There has been that Invitation unto us, in Psal. 46. 8. *Come, Bebold the Works of the Lord, what Desolations He hath made in the Earth.* Truly, there are in every Winter, many Desolations made upon the product of the Earth ; but we should then Bebold All, as well as Those works of God. We

are

are Endued with *Rational Faculties*, capable of *Beholding* the Works of our God ; and He made us *After all His other works*, on purpose that we might be the *Beholders* of all the Rest. Now, particularly

First, There is an Humble Acknowledgment of God, wherewith we are to behold his works of **CREATION**, and the *winter* may be our leisure for it. The Psalmist having mentioned the *Evening*, when men lay by their labour, he presently adds, in *Psal. 104. 24.* *O Lord how manifold are thy Works ! in wisdom hast Thou made them all.* As it then were a leisure for such a meditation ! Truly thus in the *winter*, when we throw up our other Labour ; we shoud then, *Behold these manifold works of God.* We shoud not in the *winter* become such Recluses as to forget that we are, *The Citizens of the world* ; but then take a Range about the *works* of our God in the *World*. The very name of *The World*, in the Language of the Bible signifies *Beautiful*, and altho' in the *winter* it looses much of its *Beauty*, yet we are then more at *Leisure* to behold its *Beauty*. It was the Demand of the Psalmist, in *Psal. 148. 7. 8.* *Praise she Lord, ye Hail, Snow, and Vapour, and Stormy wind: fulfilling his word.* Why, *The Snow, and Vapour, and stormy wind*, and the rest of the *Winter*, do demand of us, to *Praise the Lord*, for what of *The Lord*, is to be seen in them, and not in them alone, but in all other *Creatures*. It is a most Glorious Variety of Objects, which we have to *behold* on this little *Terraqueous Globe*, we are at present *sojourners* there

There, to pass over the Numberless *Fossils* in the Bowels of the Globe, which probably contains above Ten Thousand Millions of Cubic German Leagues, with how many *Animate Bodies* are we Entertained? Of *Beasts*, including *Serpents*, we may reckon about an Hundred and Fifty Species. The *Volatils*, or Birds, have been reckoned about Five Hundred; The *Aquatils*, or Fish, have also been reckoned about Five Hundred. The *Sub-Fish* more than as many more. The *Vegetables* or Plants, of our Universe have been counted about Six Thousand; and the *Insects*, both Terrestrial and Aquatil, more than Ten Thousand. But there are many other *Animals* to be also Beheld by us, which never could have been Beheld, until fit Instruments were Invented for the doing of it. The *Whales*, those moving Islands of more than an Hundred Foot in Length, are not of a Structure so Exquisite, so stupendous, as these *Animals*, whereof our Microscopes intallibly assure us, that many Thousands together would not equal the least Grain of our common Sand. But yet our *Erect Figure*, instructs us to *Raise* our Looks, unto the *Stars*, among which, if we were Lodged we should quite Loose our Sight of this *Globe*; tho' it be above Twenty Six Thousand *Italian Miles*, in the compass of it. We have the fairest and fullest view of the *Stars* in the Winter: (even the Cloud in *Cancer*, has been sometimes then seen, full of little *Stars*:) but what are those Few, for they are not many more than a *Thousand*, of the *Stars*, which we see without a *Telescope*, com-

pared unto the Innumerable *Mights*, wherewith from *That*, we justly suppose the *Aether* to be replenished? The *Wandering Stars*, the *Fixed Stars*, and the *Satellites* of each, how inexplicably circumstanced are they? How Regular to the Hundredth part of a Minute, are they in their Motions? and how more Bulky than our *Earth*, an hundred times over, in their Dimensions? If at last we descend into the *Sun*, that vast Fiery *Globe*, which is the *Center*, and the *Support*, of the whole Visible World besides; The Philosopher thought himself Made and Born for nothing so much, as to Behold this Heavenly *Fireball*: 'tis by the Ancient, and Soberest Computation, at least an hundred & sixty times bigger than *That* *Planer*, whereon we are the Inhabitants: whereas indeed such more Accurate Astronomers, as the Incomparable *Heselius*, have ascertained the *Sun* to be three thousand, four hundred, and *lxxv* two times bigger than this *Earth*, which is given to the *Children of Men*; but how much does it then, *Declare the Glory of God, and shew forth His Handiwork?* Let the *Winter*, when we see least of *him*, give us *Lecture* to be most Apprehensive of it.

The Jews have a Fancy among them, That when the Almighty first bespangled the *Heavens* with Stars, He left a Spot near the *North Pole* unfinished, and unfurnished, that so, in after Ages any other should be set up for a *GOD*, he might have this Trial made of them, *Go, fill up if you can that part of Heaven which is yet left imperfect!* But indeed, without any such Supposition, we may

see enough in the Heavens, to proclaim this unto us, *Lift up your Eyes on High, and Bebold, who has Created these things? None but an Infinitely Glorious God, could be the Creator of them.*

Secondly. There is a profound *Adoration of God*, wherewith we are to *Behold His Works of REDEMPTION*; and for this likewise we have the *Lisure of the Winter*. When our Lord was undergoing some of His Last Agonies, for the *Redemption of Lost Man*, 'tis said in Joh. 19. 18. *They made a Fire of Coals, for it was Cold, and they warmed themselves.* Accordingly, when we have a *cold Winter* upon us, Let us *warm* our Souls, by thinking on what our Lord Endured in the latter end of the *Winter* for us. When we are in our *Warm Houses*, O Behold, that *Hot Love* of our Lord unto our Souls, which tho' He Lay in a *Winter night* groveling on the *cold Ground*, yet made Him *Sweat*, yea, to *Sweat Clotters or Globules of Flood*, more terrible to Behold than those *Bloody Sweats*, which *Diodesus Siculus* tells us, befel the people of the East, when their *Serpents* had bitten them. When we are in our *Warm Garments*, O then Behold the *Heat* of our Lords *Love*, wherein He Hung *Naked* on the *Cross*, in the *Col Air*, for Six Hours together of a *Winter-Day*. The Unfathomable Mysterie of *Redemption* are the *Raptures* of the *Angels*, all the Year about; it is said of those *Cherubins* converstant about the *Mercy-Seat*, in 1 Pet. 1. 12. *These Things they Desire to Look into.* Let us make the same Things our Study, especially in that part of

the Year, the Winter, when we have most of Leisure for the Study. We find in Eccl. 11. 7. *Truly the Light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the Eyes to behold the Sun.* Tho in our Winter we have less Light than at other Times, yet we may then have more Time to Behold the Sun of Righteousness ; and how pleasant a Task should we Esteem it ! Let us now take a Time to Behold the Matchl ls Glories of our Lord Redeemer ; and hear that Call of God. *Behold, the Lamb of God !* There is a bright Constellation of Miracles that Unite in our Blest Mediator, and glitter wonderfully ; Let us now, Behold those Miracles of God manifest in the Flesh, and of that Child Born to us, that Son given to us, who is the Everlasting Father, that Man who is the Mighty God, and whose Name is therefore Wonderful. But now alto let us take a Time to Behold the Glorious Methods of our Salvation by this Lord Redeemer. Behold the most admirable Contrivance of our Salvation, in the New-Covenant ! It is wonderful, that God should so Love the World as to give His only Begotten Son, that whosoever Believeth in Him should not perish, but have Everlasting Life. It is wonderful, that the Only Begotten Son of God should ever take on Him the Form of a Servant, that we might become the Children of God. It is wonderful, that He who knew no Sin, should be made Sin for us, that we might be made the the Righteousness of God in Hims. The Wayes of the Holy Spirit in Applying the Redemption thus obtained for us, are yet further WONDERFUL. The **MYSTICAL BODY** of our Lord Jesus

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Christ, with regard unto the manner and effect, of our being brought into an *Union* with Him we are told, *It is fearfully and wonderfully made.* Well, we should now, Behold these Wonders, and continue to do so, till we have no more Winter, yea, till we have no more *Spirit Left.*

Thirdly, There is an Hearty Admiration of God, wherewith we are to behold his works of PROVIDENCE; and for this also we have the *Liesure of the winter.* It is noted concerning the *Wheels of Providence*, in Ezek. 10. 12. The *Wheels* were full of *Eyes.* When the *winter* comes about, in the *wheel* of the year, we should have our *eyes open*, and be full of *eyes*, to behold the motion of those wondrous *wheels.* The Government of the World is maintained in the *winter*, as well as all the rest of the year about; but we have in the Winter, more of *Liesure*, to behold the Spotless and Exact Administration of that *Government.* We behold many storms in the Winter; but it is then also a time to behold the *Power*, and *Wisdom* and *Goodness* of God, in managing all the *Storms* wherewithal the world is Ruffled, and causing them all to be subservient unto his own Designs and Interests. It is said in Psal. 107. 43. *Who so is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the Loving kindness of the Lord.* There are Illustrious Distributions, wherein the Almighty God acts as a *Rewarder* unto the children of men; and we shall be very well Rewarded for all the Confinements of the *Winter*, if we take our *Liesure* now to acquaint

quaint our selves with such Dispensations : Our Confinement will become our *Liberty* ! There are the Dispensations, of the Most High towards His *People* ; His Protecting them, His Livering them, His increasing them. When the Church of God, was Represented unto *Moses*, as a *Burning Bush*, it is said, *He drew near to Behold the Sight*. And when we are by our *Fire-side* in the Winter, we may have Liberty to behold that *Burning Bush*. There are also the Dispensations of the Most High, towards His *Enemies* ; His Confounding of them, His Destroying of them. The Winter was hardly out, when *Israel* Beheld the Great Work which the Lord did upon the *Egyptians* : And we may then also behold, how terribly *Egyptians* are punished by the Hand of God. When our Lord had been Talking with His Disciples, about those performances of *Providence*, wherein the Scriptures had Received their Accomplishment, they could say, in Luk. 24. 32. *Did not our Hearts then Burn within us?* Why, when we are even ready to *Freeze* with the Vapours of the Winter, the Disciples of our Lord should then be Talking together, about His Loing, in the World ; The News of Great Occurrents are then to be Enquired after, not as by *Abenians*, having only an Itch of Novelty to prompt those Enquiries, but as by *Disciples inquisitiv*, after the *Fulfilments of the Scriptures*, and after the Illustrations of the Divine Attributes, in those *Fulfilments*. Thus are we to Talk till our *Hearts Burn within us*. And hence also, *Church-History is a very suitable Study for the Winter* ;

Ad mortuo

Martyrologies, and the Lives of Eminent Persons, and the Stories of Eminent Reformation, Difficulties, and Deliverances attending the Church of God, are now very fitly Studied.

Finally. As it was laid, in Job 37. 14. Stand still, and Consider the wondrous works of God: When the Winter comes, we can't Go out as at other times; Well, since we must Sit still, now let us more than ever, Consider the Wondrous Works of God.

III. In the very CONSTITUTION OF THE WINTER it self, There are very sensible Works of God, and our God requires us to be very sensible of those Notable Works. Almighty God now Stays up our Hands, that we may Know His Work. What Work? Why, that very Work of Scaling up our Hands; and that Work of sending Snow, and Rain, and Winter upon the Earth.

Well then, when the Winter comes, we must Acknowledge that it is from God. It is as we read, Psal. 147. 17. Gods Cell, and for that cause we may not call it Cruel Cell; at least it must be a cruel Catechisis, by which we call it so? nothing done by God, should be esteemed Cruel. Even so, 'tis Gods Water, the Almighty God is to be Reverenced as the Orderer of it all.

Is the Winter now Rolled about? Then Know, That God is the MAKER of the Winter. 'Tis Inquired, in Job 38. 28, 29. *Hasb the Rain a Father? Out of whose Womb came she Ice? and who*

Hoary

Heavy Frost of Heaven, who bath Gendred it? So, when the Winter is upon us, we may Enquire, whence comes this Coll, and Snow, and Rain, and all the rest? But we see them all fall from Heaven; & unto the God of Heaven should we ascribe the making of all. As the Winter is of Gods Promise; Whether the Antediluvian World had any proper winter or no, yet the Lord presently after the Flood, engaged concerning our present World, *Summer & Winter shall not cease*: Thus, the Winter is of Gods Making too. The Numberless Number of *Saline* Particles, from whence at least some circumstances of the Winter do arise, do all of them say, *Tis the Lord that has made us, and not we ourselves*. There seems to be a vall store of *Cor puscles* a little akin to *Nitre*, exhaled from the Terrestrial Globe, and roving about in sundry parts of the *Atmosphere* (of the Figure which *Philonous* tells us, *Democritus* asfig'd unto Frigorific Atoms) and these may not a little contribute unto many things that we feel in our cold. But still, who made them all? And thus, not only those mighty Rands of *Ice* (that *Magnum Duramen Aquarium*, as *Lucretius* calleth it, Encountred by such Navigators as *Janus Munckius*, who saw these Icy-Islands floating Twenty Fathom above Water; or as *Baffin*, who found some above Water, between two & three Hundred foot High; or those that sometimes occur in the River of *Canada*, where Icy-Islands have been seen, computed Fourscore Leagues in Length; but every little Ice-Cycle is the Workmanship of God.

Again,

Again, Know, That God is the SENDER of the Winter. 'Tis affirmed, in Job 37. 9, 10. *Cold comes out of the North; by the Breath of God, frost is given, and the Breadth of the Waters is straitned.* When a Northern Winter is nipping of us, 'tis from an Edict of God, giving order for such a Season. It is God that sends Rain (and the Rest) upon the Earth. The Winterish Winds blow our Winter about our Ears; yea, but it is the Breath of God, that is the First Mover of all. There is much Dispute, what is the *Primum Frigidum*; whether *Air*, or *Water*, or *Earth*, or *Nitre*, or what? And some will Dispute whether there be any such *Thing* at all, or no. For if the *Coldness* of any thing signify no more, than its not having its Insensible Parts agitated so much as those of our *Sensories* by which we judge of *Tactile Qualities*; then to make a thing become *cold*, there needs no more than that the *Sun* or *Fire*, or some other Agent, that more vehemently Agitated its parts before, do now cease to do it. But be *Cold* a *positive Quality*, (which I encline to think) or a *privative*, still 'tis the Breath of God that gives Rise unto it. What the Centurion said about the Servants under His Command, *I say to thee, Come, and be comes*; thus the *Winter*; 'tis our Great Sovereign who says to it, *Come*; and so the *Winter comes*.

Once more, Know, That God is the RULER of the Winter. This is intimated in Psal. 94. 17. *Thou hast set all the Borders of the Earth, thou hast made Summer and Winter.* So, It is God, who lets

Borders to the Winter upon the Earth. It is God who says to the Winter, *Keep off till such a Month.* It is God, who says to the Winter, *Go off at such a Month.* The *Unlimitable Holy One of Israel*, is He that *Limits* our Winter for us. The *winds* that *Rise* in the *winter* are in His *Fit*, and as to the *waves* that are so often *Crusted* in the *winter*, *so to the winter it self*, He saith, *Hitherto shalt thou go, and no further.*

Let me add, The Obedience of the *winter* unto our God, should be considered by us, to shame our *Disobedience*. If God say to the *Snow*, and the *Rain*, and the *Like*, *Be thou upon the Earth*, straightway they are so. What Wretches then are we, that when this God shall say to us, *Be thou upon thy Knees*, or, *Let thy Heart be in Heaven*, we slight what He saith! We read in Psal. 147. 15. *He sendeth forth his Commandment upon Earth, His Word Runneth very swiftly*: and then comes, the *Snow*, the *Frost*, the *Ice*, and the *Cold*. Well, but it follows, *He shewed His Word unto Jacob*. And now, does *Jacob* yield as much Obedience unto the *Word* of God, as the *winter* does? Alas, How *Disobedient* are we! In the *winter*, the *Work* of God is done by the *winter* it self; but the *Word* of God then prescribes a further *work* unto us; and can it be said, *We run very swiftly about that work*? No truly; our *wil* to our *work*, seems *Congealed* as it were by an *Eternal winter*. Said the *Psalmist*, in Psal. 119. 91. *All are thy Servants*. What a sad world is this! Every thing *Obeys* the Great God, without any *Contradiction*, but only

MAN,

MAN, and the DEVIL? methinks we should be ashamed of our Company in our *Disobedience*!

But that our *Obedience* unto God may be furthered, by the very *Constitution of the winter*, we should do well, upon the several Things therein occurring, to make our *Occasional Reflections*. We may *Spiritualize* the *winter*, and we may have such *Thoughts* thereby Railed in our Minds, and such *Lessons*, and such *Wishes*, as may bring unto us the *Life* and *Peace*, which the *Spiritually minded* have in their being so. We will Exemplifie a few of those innumerable *Devout Thoughts*, wherein the *winter* sometimes hath provoked a serious Man, to address the God that made the *winter*: and I will confine my self to the *Scripture* in them all.

The first among all the *Meteors* of the *winter*, that uses to be considered, is that of, The *WIND*, which *Plato* defines as well as any since, to be, *The motion of the Air about the Earth*.

*Asper ab Axe ruit Boreas, furit Eurus ab ortu,
Auster amat medium solēm, Zephyrusque cadentem.*

But, Whatever Point of the Compacts, the *Wind* blows upon, Let it blow some *Good Thoughts* into our Minds, and it will be no *Ill Wind* unto us. Now let these be the *Wishes* of your Souls; Let this now be the *still voice* of your Souls, and the *Lord will be in the Wind*.

[*Ezek. 37. 19.*] *Lord, Let the Breath come from the four winds, and breathe upon thy slain people every where, that they may Live.*

[*Dan. 7. 2.*] *Lord, Let the stirrings of the Wind*

VWind upon the Sea, in the Tumults of the Nations, produce the Accomplishment of thy Glorious Prophecies.

[Isa. 48. 25.] *Lord, bring not the four winds from the four Quarters of Heaven, to scatter any part of thy Church toward all these winds.*

[Zech. 6. 5.] *Lord, Let me have many Heavenly Kindnesses done for me, by thine Angels, whom thou callst, The VVinds of the Heaven.*

[Isa. 27. 8.] *Lord, Let not thy Anger overthrow me, but stay thy Rough wind in the Day of the East wind.*

[Isa. 41. 16. Isa. 64. 6.] *Lord, Let me not be found among those, whom the VWind of thy Displeasure shall carry away, and the VVhirlwind scatter them; and let it not be said of me, My Iniquities, Like the VWind, have taken me away.*

[Job 20. 15.] *Lord, Let not thy Terrors, in sore Calamities be turned upon me; Let them not pursue my Soul as the wind.*

[Isa. 22. 3. Psl. 55. 8.] *Lord, Let the Blessed JESUS, be unto me, as an Hiding Place from the wind, and a Covert from the Tempest; Unto Him, Through Him, Let me hasten my Escape, from the windy Storm and Tempest.*

[Matt. 7. 25.] *Lord, Let me be a Wise Builder, the House of whose Faith and Hope shall be so Founded on the Rock, as to stand, when the VVinds blow and beat upon it.*

[Hof. 13. 15.] *Lord, Let no Adversary like an East wind, come, and as the wind of the Lord, come up, against thy People.*

John

[John 3. 8] *Lord, As the Wind bloweth where it listeth, and we hear the sound thereof, but cannot tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth, so let me be born of thy Holy Spirit.*

[Eccl 11. 4] *Lord, Let me not so observe the wind, as to neglect any Opportunities of Sowing, in Acts of Liberality.*

[Math 8. 27] *Lord, The Winds obey thy Christ; O let me do so too!*

[Psal. 13. 10] *Lord, Unto the Saving and Helping of all thy people, do thou fly upon the Wings of the Wind; and let me do so, in the Swiftness of my Obedience unto thy Majesty.*

[Gen. 8. 1.] *Lord, Let that Wind pass over Earth, which may carry off the Flood of Ignorance, Wickedness and Miserie, that has Long Overwhelmed it.*

[Jon. 4. 8.] *Lord, Expose me not unto any such vehement East-wind of Calamity as may cause my Soul to faint.*

[Act 27. 7.] *Lord, Let me not have cause to complain, concerning my Voyage to Glory. The Wind would not suffer me.*

[Psal. 107. 25, 29.] *Lord, Let not a Stormy-wind be Raised in my Soul, but do thou make the Storm a Calm.*

[Eph. 4. 14.] *Lord, Let me not be like a Child in Religion, Tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of Doctrine.*

[Jam. 1. 6.] *Lord, Let me always Pray in Faith, not wavering like a Wave of the Sea, driven with the Wind.*

[Jam. 3. 4.] *Lord, Let me well manage the Helm of my Tongue, when the fierce winds are driving of me.*

[Job 7. 7] *Lord, cause me duly to Remember, that my Life is wind; to Transitory, and Evanescing! I am as the Wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.*

[Isa 45. 29] *Lord, Leave me not unto a Doctage upon those Idols, which are but VVind and Confusion.*

[Hos 8. 7] *Lord, Let me not fall into those Iniquities, wherein I shall only Sow the VVind, and Reap the VVbinwind.*

[Job 15. 2. Job 16. 3.] *Lord, Let me not pursue that vain knowledge, which does but fill the Belly with the East wind: nor let me use VWords of VVind.*

[Jer 5. 13 & 22. 22. Ecc 5. 5. 16.] *Lord, Let not my Expectations become wind; and let not the wind Eat up my Comforts: Nor let me in my Undertakings, Labour for the wind.*

[Prov. 25. 14.] *Lord, Let me not be a proud Boaster of a False Gift, like Clouds and VVind without Rain.*

[Isa. 7. 2.] *Lord, Let me not be overcome with such Fears, that my Heart shall be moved, as the Trees of the Wood, are moved with the Wind.*

[So I Read, Cant. 4. 16.] *Depart O Northwind, and Come, thou South; blow upon my Garden, that the Spices thereof may flow out.*

The other Meteors that most abound in the
Winter

Winter, are the *Aqueous* ones, rather than the *Ignite*. The whole *Air* seems to be a Great *Vapor*, or *Alembic* for the Generating of them; their Origin is that in *Psal 135. 7.* and *Jer. 10. 13.* God causes the *Vapour to Ascend from the Ends of the Earth*. Well then, Of these. When the *RAIN* falls upon us by a *Resolution of Raised Vapours into drops of Water*; Let our wishes be of this Import, and we shall have *Showers of Blessing* indeed; both in *Summer* and in *Winter* too.

[*Psal. 11. 6. Gen. 19. 24.*] *Lord, Let me be none of the Wicked, upon whom thou wilt Rain Snares, Fire and Brimstone, and an Horrible Tempest, as thou didst of old upon wicked Sodom.*

[*Jer. 17. 6.*] *Lord, Let not my Soul be, Like the Heath in the Desert, that sees not when Good Rain cometh.*

[*Acts 14. 17.*] *Lord, Let me humbly Acknowledge the Witness, which thou givest of thy Power and Goodness, in thy Giving us Rain from Heaven.*

[*Lev. 26. 4 Deut 11. 14. and 28. 12. 1 King 8. 26. Psal. 68. 9. and 65. 11.*] *Lord, Evermore fulfil thy Promise to thy People, I will give you Rain in due Season; and when they ask for it, Then Teach them the good way whither they should walk, and give Rain upon thy Land; and, Send plentiful Rains to confirm thine Inheritance when it shall be weary. So, Let thy Paths, the Clouds Drop Fatness upon us.*

[*Jer. 14: 22. see Zech: 10. 1.*] *Are there any among the Vanities of the Gentiles, that can*

cause Rain ! Or, can the Heavens give showers ? Art not thou He, O Lord our God ? Therefore we will wait upon thee ; for thou hast made all of these things.

[Amos 4. 7.] Lord, I would own, That it is Thou who causest it to Rain upon one City, and causest it not to Rain upon another City.

[Mic. 5. 7.] Lord, Let the Accomplishments of thy Word, unto thy Church, come, like the showers upon the Grass, which tarries not for man nor waits for the Sons of men.

[Math : 5. 45.] Lord, As Thou sendest Rain upon the Just, and the Unjust, So let me do good unto all men, even unto my Foes, as well as unto my Friends.

[Zech. 14. 17. Isa. 5. 6.] Lord, Let me not have a Soul, without the Rain of Grace, or Joy, as they have, that come not into thy Church, to Worship the King, the Lord of Hosts : Nor let thy Vineyard so offend thee, that thou shalt Command the Clouds to Rain no Rain upon it.

[Deut. 32. 2] Lord, Let thy Word in the Dispensations of the Gospel, Drop as the Rain upon my Soul.

[Psal. 72. 6] Lord, Let the Influences of thy Son the Lord Jesus Christ, come down upon the World, and upon Me, in the World, Like Rain upon the Mown Grass, as the showers that water the Earth.

[Heb. 6. 7. 8.] Lord, Let me not be Like the Earth, which Drinks in the Rain that comes oft

upou it, but bears Thorns and Briars, and is Rejected, and is nigh unto Curseing.

[Hos. 10. 12.] Lord, It is Time for me to seek thee, that thou wouldest Rain down Righteousness upon me.

[Isa. 44. 3.] Lord, pour Floods of Celestial Water upon my Thirsty Soul; pour and shower thy Spirit upon me.

[Ezek. 22. 24] Lord, Let not our Land, be a Land not Rained upon, in the Day of Indignation.

[Job 5. 9, 10] Lord, Thou dost Marvelous Things without Number, when thou givest Rain upon the Earth:

[Isa. 4. 6.] Lord, give me in thy self a Place of Refuge and of Covert, from Storm, and from Rain.

[Psal 84. 6, 7] Lord, Tho' the Rain fill the Pools, yet let me chearfully go thro' Wet and Dry, to wait upon thee in the Assemblies of thy Zion.

[Gen 7. 2] Lord, Rescue me and the World, from the Sins, that once provoked thee, to make it Rain upon the Earth, Forty Days and Forty Nights, till a Defolating Flood came upon the World.

[Ezr 10. 9.] Lord, Let a great Rain cause me to Tremble at thy greater Judgments.

[Prov 27. 15] Lord, Send not upon me, an Affliction which may be as a continual Dropping in a very Rainy Day.

[Prov 16. 15] Lord, Let thy Favour in the Favour of my Rulers be to me, As a Cloud of the Latter Rain.

[Hos 6. 3] Lord, Come unto me, in a way

of mercy, As the Rain, as the latter and the former Rain upon the Earth.

[Jer. 5. 24.] Finally Let me now fear the Lord my God, that giveth Rain.

Thus for the Rain.

But when the SNOW, which is Frothed Rain, lies about us, our Wishes may be thus Formed.

[Isa. 55. 10. 11] Lord, As the Snow comes down from Heaven, & returns not thither, but waters the Earth, & makes it bring forth & bud, So let thy Word accomplish my being made fruitful before thee.

[Prov. 25. 13.] Lord, As the Cold of Snow, (or drink Snow-Cold) in the time of Harvest, is very acceptable, so let my Fidelity render Me to all that are concerned in me.

[Job 19. 30.] Lord, help me to Consider, that tho' I should wash my self with Snow-Water, & make my hands never so clean, yet much Filthiness would cleave unto me, whereby I deserve to be Abhorred.

[Lam. 4. 7.] Lord, let a Work of real Sanctification upon me, render me like the Nazarines purer than Snow.

Numbers 12. 10] Lord, make me penitently sensible of the Leprosy, upon my soul, which is a Distemper worse than that Bodily one wherin persons have become Leprous, White as the Snow.

[Isa. 1. 18. Psal. 51. 7.] Lord, let my sins, that

that have been like Scarlet, become White like Snow, by thy Free and Full pardon of them all. O wash me in thy Blood of Sprinkling, and I shall be whiter than Snow.

[Dan. 7. 9. Rev. 1. 14.] Lord, prepare me for, and hasten on the World, the coming of that Ancient of Days, whose Garments are white as the snow, and whose Hairs are white as Wool, as white as Snow.

[Prov. 26. 1.] Lord, let me not be like one of those Fools, for whom Honour would be unseemly like the Snow in Summer.

[Psal. 147. 16. 18.] Lord, when thou hast given Snow like Wool, thou sendest out thy word and melteth it, and wilt not thou melt this heart of mine by thy word, into the Resolutions of Repentance.

[Jer. 18. 14, 15.] Will a man leave the Snow of Lebanon, which comes from the Rock of the Field? Would a Thirsty Traveller, finding such a Supply of pure water, slight it? Neither let me Forget thee, O my God.

This for the Snow; But when the HAIL which is Frozen Rain, Visits us, it may Awake these Wishes in us.

[Hag. 2. 17.] Lord, It was thy Complaint, I Smote you with Hail, yet ye turned not unto me; Let not my Obstinacy in Sin, give cause for that Complaint.

[Rev. 16. 21.] Lord, Hasten upon the Anti-Christian Babylon, that Great Hail out of Heaven, whereof every stone shall be about the weight of a Talent.

[Isa. 28. 2.] Lord, Let not thy people be Invaded by any Enemy, which as a Tempest of Hail, and a Destroying Storm, shall cast them down to the Earth.

[Ezek. 13. 13. Isa. 28. 17. Psal. 18. 12.] Lord, Let not my Refuges, be such, as there shall be an Overflowing Shower in thine anger, and Great Hailstones in thy Fury to consume them; Let them not be, Refuges of Lies, which the Hail shall sweep away. Fit me for the Day when I shall see the Descending Jesus Alarum the World with Brightness, Hailstones, and Coals of Fire.

[Isa 30. 30.] Lord, Let me Tremble at thy Threatnings as they did in the Day, when thou didst cause thy Glorious Voice to be heard, and Show the Lighting down of thy Arm, with Scattering, and Tempest, and Hailstones.

[Josh 10. 11.] Blessed be God, That He does not cast down such great Stones from Heaven upon us, as to make us Dy with the Hailstones.

[Exod. 9. 20] The Egyptians, being warned of a great Hail, such as Followed the Word of the Lord, fled into Houses for their Safety. Lord, Let me so Fear the Hailstorm of thy Judgments, as to seek for Safety in the Lord Jesus Christ.

But it were Endless to Enumerate the Ejaculations of a Devout Mind, on these Occasions. Thus, When 'tis FAIR, Clear, Bright WEATHER, how Agreeable were it for us to wish; Lord, may the Light of thy Countenance be Uplified on my Soul! and, May I walk in that Light all the Day Long: So, when 'tis Cloudy Weather, how Agreeable to wish,

Lord,

Lord, When shall the Son of Man come in the Clouds of Heaven ! and, O let it not be with my Soul, a Day of Clouds and of thick Darkness.

The shooting of such Arrows up to Heaven, is an Incomparable Exercise for a Soul, that Looks to *Eternal Invisibles*, to *Invisible Eternals*, on a *Winter-Day*; and of the man, that on a *Winter Day* to Employs himself, I say. *Blessed is the man, that has a Quiver full of such arrows.*

IV. The *Merciful Works* of God, which provides for our *NECESSITIES* in *THE WINTER* are very manifold, and it becomes us to take a most *Thankful Notice* of those many *Mercies*. When our God *Seals up our Hands*, in the *Winter*, He *Opens His own Hand*, in our *Liberal Supplies* for the *Winter*; and we should so *Know those Works of God*, as to be *Thankfully Affected* with them.

The *Winter* it self, *That* is not without much of *Mercy* in it. It is our *Winter* particularly, which for divers Months in the Year, is a better Defence unto us against *Forreign Invasions*, than all the *Sconces* and *Castles*, wherewith we could be *Fortify'd*. Doubtless the *Polanders* thought their *Cold* was a *kindness* unto them, when in an Army of *seventy Thousand Turks* Invading them, *Forty Thousand* suddenly perished, by the *Severity* of the *Cold*, tho' it were but the Month of *November* with them. Truly, in the Month of *November* the *Cold* begins none of the least *preservatives* also for us *New-Englanders*! And who can

can say, How many Epidemical Diseases have by our *Winter* been Extinguished? Our Cold precipitates the *Vapours* which would else Thicken and Poison our *Air*, and by Freezing the Surface of the *Earth*, it keeps in many malignant *Stems*, that otherwise would thence arise to Suffocate us. It is called for, in *Psal 148. 8 Praise the Lord, ye Hail, and Snow, and Vapour, and Stormy Wind.* It seems, they that have *much*, of the *Hail*, the *Snow*, the *Vapour*, may find *something* in them, for which they should *Praise the Lord*. The *Psalmist* says, *God giveth Snow like Wool*; the *Snow*, is as a goodly white Robe on the Body of the *Earth*, whereby 'tis cherished, with a *Nitrus Impregnation*, for *Fruitfulness* in the *Year Entwining*. *Thuanus* tells us, *That sometimes it has Rained Corn*; and indeed, what *Corn* should we have, if all *Rain* were denied unto us? It was *Mi aculous*, when *God* after a *short Rained full Bread* and then *Flesh*, for *Israel* of old; *He* does it in *Effect* to us continually.

But as the *Winter* brings much of *MERCY* to us, it brings much of *Hardship* too? *Fliny* calls the *Snow*, and the *Ice*, the *Punishments of the Mountains*. We who dwell in a *plain* Region, as well as they who dw'l upon the *Rigid* and *Ragged Edges* of such *Mountains*, would be sorely *Punished*, by the *Hardship* of the *Winter*, if the *Mercy* of our *God* should not *Relieve* us. It was said, in *Job 38. 32, 23. Hast thou Entred into the Treasures of the Snow? Or, hast thou seen the Treasures of the Hail? which I have Reserved against the Time of Trouble.* Truly, the *Time of Snow*, and the *Time*

Time of *Hail*, would be a sore *Time of Trouble* unto us, if God should not from the other *Treasures* of his Bounty, therein make a Comfortable *Provision* for us. This I would say; The *Common Mercies* of God are a Ground, and call for more than *Common Praises* to God. May we from this *Time*, Resolve to be more than *ordinarily* Thankful for our *Common Mercies*, and we have to Extraordinary Good Purpose now Spent the *Time* of this present *Exercize*.

We may be Thankful, that the *Winter* it self is not so *Hard*, either as it might be, if God should make it so, or as it is now in some other Lands, yea, or as it has been heretofore among our selves. The *Palmist* saw cause to say, in *Psal. 147. 17.* *Who can stand before His Cold?* If God should carry on the *Cold* unto a little further Extremity upon us, there could be no *Standing* before it. Or, if the *Cold* which in its Extremity tarries usually but *Three Days* among us, were Extended for *Three Months*, instead of any *Standing*, there could be no *Living* for us. But, in the midst of the *Cold*, *God Remembers Mercy*. And *Our Winters indeed are not so fiercely cold*, as those of some *other Countreys*. We are not, as *Livy* speaks of the *Alps*; *Eternis Damnati Nivibus*, *De omn'd unto Eternal Snowes!* 'Tis not with us, as *Olearius* tells us, tis in *Muscovia*, where, Their *Spittle* will freeze ere it reach the *Ground*; and so violent is the *Cold*, that no *Furs* can hinder it, but sometimes mens *Noses*, *Ears*, *Hands*, and *Feet*, will be *Frozen*, and all fall off; And, as the Great *Flexib.*

or has reported, not only they who Travel abroad, but many in the very Markets of their Towns are mortally pinch'd, so that you shall see many drop down in the streets; & many Travellers brought home Dead and stiff in their Sleds. Which is a Report that *Sigismundus ab Herberstein* has also given us. Nor is it with us, as Capt. *James* found it, in some of his Northern Coasting, where, when he and his Companions were a little while parted, they had their Faces, Hair, and Cloaths, frozen over that they could not know each other, by their *Habits*, no, nor by their *Voices*: Nor, as where *Gerat de Ucer* iwas, when their *shoes* Froze as hard as Horns upon their Feet; nor were they able to wear them; Nor, as where *Beauplan* tells us, that without Good Precautions, the cold produces those *Cancers*, which in a few Hours destroy the parts they seize upon.

Yea, and our own *Winters* are, as observably as Comfortably Moderated since the Land has been Peopled, and Opened, at Later Years. Our *Snows* are not so Deep, and Long, since the Progress that has been made, in the Clearing of our *Woods*; and our *Winds* blow not such *Raivers*, as in the Days of our Fathers, when the *Hinds* of the Good Men would freeze unto the *Bread* upon their Tables, and the strongest *Wine* there would in a few minutes be hardly to be swallowed for its Congelation: yea, *Water* cast up into the *Air*, would be Turned into *Ice* e're it came unto the Ground. I wish, That all Wise Men would make the Reflection of *Petranius* upon such

such a matter; says he, *In cultis Asperis; Regni-
ribus, dantis Nives haerent: ast ubi strato Domes-
tifica Tellus nitet, dum Loqueris Lewis prima dilat-
bitur: similiter in pectoribus ira Confidit; Feras
quidem mentes oblitet, Eruditas præterlabitur.* In
short English: As our Land grows better Cul-
tivated, we shall have less *Winter* and less *An-
ger* too among us.

But then, Let our *Thankful Thoughts* proceed unto the more particular Provisions, wherewith our kind God, furnisheth us against the Assualts of a *Needy Winter*. Be thankful that we do not undergo the Torments of *Exile*, in such starving Circumstances, as Ecclesiastical History tells us, the Martyrdom of *Aluria* was attended with.

Let us be Thankful for our **CLOTHING**. It is a stroke in the picture of the wise Woman, *She is not Afraid of the Snow for her Household, for all her Household are Clothed with Durable Garments.* 'Tis well for us, that we have such Garments by Night as well as by Day, to keep off the *Cold*, which would otherwise pio-
digiously mortify us. A poor Naked Beggar of *R. D.*, being in the Depth of Winter asked by a Person of Quality, covered with his thick Furs, *How he cou'd so thin clad, bear the Cold?* He reply'd, *My Lord, should you do, as I do, you would feel as Little Cold as I!* but being asked, *How is that?* He answer'd, *Why, As I do, But as all the Clerches you've got.* But indeed, if we were almost Naked, in the Cold of our Win-

ter, it would be but a *cold Comfort* unto us to think, *These few Thread-bare Clothes are all we have to Cover us.* Be Thankful; and at the same time let us Entreat of our God, That He would bellow upon us the *Righteousness* of the Lord Jesus Christ, for the *Garment* of our Souls, and Adorn us with the *Fine Linen*, which is *The Righteousness of the Saints.*

Let us also be Thankful for our **FUEL**. There have been *Pagans* that have sometimes worshipped the *fire* as a *God*. But it would well become *Christians*, to Worship the True God with manifold Praises for the Advantages which we have against our Cold by the *Fire*. Our Indians have thought the *Fire* must needs be a *God*; because when a poor man is ready to perish with *Cold* in the *Winter*, one *Spark* of it, will in a few minutes blaze out so comfortably as to save the *Life* of him. Instead of so Rude a Fancy, it becoms us to say, *There is much of God in the Fire*; His Greatness, and His Bounty may be seen *Sparkling* in it. Be Thankful; and at the same time, Let us Entreat of our God, That we may be *Baptised* with the *Fire* of His Holy Spirit, which will make us, *Fervent in Spirit Serving the Lord.*

Let us be thankful for Our **HOUSES** too. We are not left now to lodge abroad in the *Cold*, with none but the *Ground* for our *Bed*, the *Snow* for our *Coverlid*, and the *Sky* for our *Canopy*: nor are we obliged unto such Wretched *Wigwams* as were the best *Habitations* of the *Barbarous Natives*

tives that were here before us. How well are we lodged in the Winter; and neither by *Burnings* nor by *Earthquakes*, forced out of *Doors*? Be thankful; and at the same time let us entreat of our God, that we have a *Mansion* in our *Heavenly Fathers house* forever. The Keenest *Winters* in the world, have been made very tolerable by peoples making some *Rooms* of their *Houses* under the *Earth*, and keeping themselves in such *subterraneous Rooms*. But let the *Winters* which call us to give thanks, for our warm *Houses* on the *Earth*, cause us to be Concerned for, *An house Eternall in the Heavens*.

And let us be Thankful for our *TABLES*. How many *Warm Dishes*, have we to cherish us, whereby we are strengthened against the *Cold* of the *winter*? And how many Refreshing *Draughts* to Refresh our *Feeble Spirits*? Be thankful, & entreat of God, that we may be admitted unto *His Feast of Fat things full of Marrow, and of Wines on the Lees, well-Refined*, the least whereat, *There will be no taking away*.

We have a Glorious Benefactor in the Heavens by whose Benignity upon Earth, we live well all the Winter long: and all the Expressions of that Benignity, are to be Received with a most hearty *Thankfulness*.

I pray, let us not be condemned, by the very *Jewis* themselves, with whom it has been customary, still to make use of their Daily comforts, with a *Boruk Adonai*, or, *Blessed be the Lord*.

When Job was looking back upon the Good days which he had seen, he laid, in Job, 29, 2. 4. O that I were as in mebbz past, as in the Days when God preserved me ; as I was in the dayes of my youth ! Some render it so, A - was in the days of my Winter Quarters. Why, when the Great Commander of the Universe, does Command us into our Winter Quarters ; He do's then preserve us, and by his Light we walk thro' the Darkness of the winter. And I would now say, O that we were so thankful, as we should be for such merciful months !

V. The Works which, God has FORMERLY DONE TOWARDS OURSELVES, ought always to be Remembred with us ; and the Winter is a very proper Season for that Remembrance.

Here is the *work* of God, which we are to know when by the winter He seaks up our Hand ; even the whole *Work* of God, in the whole course of our Life.

There have been SMITING Works of God, which ought seriously to be Remembred with us ; As it is said, in Lam. 3. 19. 20. Rememb'reng my Affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the Gall, my soul hateth them still in Remembrance, and is burned in me. Behold a fit work for the winter ? Have we not sometimes been in a winter of adversity, wherein this and that *sort* of affliction and misery, has been hard upon us ? Now in the winter, let it be part of our work, to recount every such work of God. Now bring to Remembrance all that wormwood, and Gall ; but what for ?

Truly

Truly, to see whether you have been such *Gainers* by all those *Chastisements* as you should have been; and whether the *weeds* of the Corruptions in your *Hearts*, and of the Disorders in your *Lives*, have been duly Nipt by the *Frost* of such a *Winter*.

But there have also been *SMILING* Works of God, which ought carefully to be *Remembered* with us. It was the Language of a David, in Psal 103. 2. *Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits.* To *His God*, is not the least of the Duties, which the *Ever-Elected* God requires of man; and all true *Davids* or men *Follow'd by God*, evermore *Love* to be *Blessing of God*. If this is to be done, *At all times*, as the *Psalmanist* elsewhere speaks, I am sure it may eminently be done in *Winter-times*. But God is not *Really Bless'd* or *Serv'd*, if not *Heartily*; and in our *Eff'ring of God*, the thing is *Done to Halves*, if the *whole Soul*, or all the *Powers* of the *Soul*, be not engaged in it. Indeed such is our *Backwardness*, to the *Blessing of God*, that we had need earnestly to stir, and spur, and rouse ourselves unto the Doing of it. Let us then *stir up* ourselves, till we have got ourselves into an *heat*, at this work, in our *Winter*, and know that a *Commemoration* of Gods *Benefits* to us, is to be one *Main Ingredient* of Our *Thank-givings to Him*.

Well then, Let this be one considerable Stroke of our *Winter-work*; even, To run over the *Stories* of our *LIVES*, by reckoning up the *Benefits* of *God*, and reflecting on that *Goodness* and *Mercy*, wherewith we have been followed all our *Lives*.

Lives. What if you should now and then spend whole DAYS OF THANKSGIVING, not only when the Authority does usually once in a Winter call the whole Province to observe such a Day; but also in secret places before God, by yourselves alone? Some Children of God, have doubtless Enjoyed, *An Heaven upon Earth*, by Detracting themselves unto such an Heavenly and Glorious Exercise; and a Day so Devoted, has ordinarily been followed with some observable Mercy of God. However, Let us every Winter Set apart our Time, to Commemorate the many Benefits of God, unto us, in our Lives, and utter our just *Hallelujahs* upon every Article in that Commemoration.

Particularly; The FIRST Article in our Commemoration may be, The Benefits of God, relating to the Protection which attended our FIRST PRODUCTION: Our Formation in the Womb, and Reception from the Womb. About our being Shaped in our Mothers, we may say, *Lord, I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully Made.* And about our being Taken from our Mothers, we may say, *Lord, Thou art He, who took me out of the Womb.* As for our Bodies, 'tis impossible for any thing to be better contrived, than they are in the whole Make of them. What a sad thing would it have been, if these had been monstrously Deformed, or Defective in any One of all their Members? Truly, There are Thousands of Mercies and Wonders, in one perfect Child! And then, as for our Spirits, They are certainly the most Noble

ble Things that inhabit this Lower World. How doleful had been our plight, if these had Lost any of their *Faculties*; were we *Fools*, or *Mud*? But indeed, we have Souls capable of a very vast Improvement, in the *Honouring & Enjoying* of our God! What shall I say? That we are Arriv'd alive among the Living on the Earth, is a Thing full of *Marvels*, if not of *Miracles*. What if we had Expired *Embryos*, whereby all our Opportunities to Glorify God, had been Lost for ever; yea, and this, after our being *Animated*, but perhaps, before our being any way given unto God in the *New-Covenant*, by our Parents; who 'tis possible were themselves, *At that Time Strangers from the Covenant of Promise*, and so *Having no Hope*, for their miserable Offspring? O think on what thou *Art*, and what thou *mightest have been*! But,

The SECOND Article in our *Commemoration* may be, The Benefits of God, relating to the PLACE of our NATIVITY, or at least of our HABITATION. Where do we Dwell? 'Tis in a Land, Enriched with all sorts of *Temporal Conveniences*. 'Tis not where we must have Endured, *The Want of all Things*; not in the *Dark Places of the Earth*, which are *filled with Cruelty*. We Dwell, where we have a plenty of *Meat*, of *Drink*, of *Apparel*, and of the *Belt*; and it is plain, that the *Poor* do not in any Country Live so well as they do in *Ours*. We Dwell where we have the *Right of ENGLISH-MEN* for our *Birthrights*; which is an *Inheritance of ours*

more consequence than what any other Nation upon Earth is favoured with: yea, and we have *Additional Priviledges*, as we are NEW-ENGLANDERS, whereof we may say, as the Jewish Rabbi did of *Liberty*, *If the Heavens were Parchment, and the Seas were Ink, all would be too Little to write the Praises due unto our God upon that account.* We Dwell where Civility abounds; where *Knowledge* and *Learning*, with *Schools* and other means for it, are promoted; where *Vice* is by wholesome *Laws* restrained; where *Humane Society* is made Hailie and Pleasant by the Orders of it; and where *Industry* is Encouraged. But this is not all; *Multa Majora Canamus.* 'Tis in a Land, Exalted with all sorts of *Spiritual Advantages*; 'Tis not, where the *People* perish, because they *have no Vision*. I pray mark it, If the world at this Day be Divided into *One and Thirty* parts, about *Nineteen* of them are *Heathen Idolaters*; about *Seven* of them are *Mahometans*; hardly *Five* of them are so much as called *Christians*. And of what has been styled *Christendom*, how small a *Moyetiz*, is rescued either from that *Superstition*, or *Persecution*, which destroys all Real *Christianity*? Yea, but you and I have, *The Lines fallen to us in such a pleasant Place!* We Dwell in a *Goshen*, in a *Protestant*, and, a *Puritan Soyl*; and where a Power to persecute is by a *Royal Charter* for ever kept from coming into the *Hands* of *any* that might hereafter incline to use it on us. And, in what *Age*? Had we been Born a few *Ages* ago, it *must* have been in a *Pagan*, or in a *Popish Age*.

and before PRINTING was Invented, when a Bible must have cost a man an Incredible Sum of money, if he could have got it so; and perhaps Hanging or Burning into the Bargain. Alas, Brethren, There is not one of us, but what are Descended from the Loy'ns of many, that are now Roaring in the Place of Dragons! But as for us, we are Born in an Age of Light. Yea, 'Tis in the very Dawns of our Lords Coming to Destroy the Wicked One. I am verily perswaded, There are some already Born, who shall see the most Glorious Revolutions that ever happened in any former Ages; even, *The Glorious Things that are spoken of Thee, O thou City of God!* It is a privilege, To be Born so low, so far down in the Line of Time. To pass on,

The THIRD Article in our Commemoration may be, The Benefits of God, relating to the FAMILY, which has given us our ORIGINAL, and our EDUCATION. What Parents have we had? perhaps we are not of the House of the Wicked, which has the Curse of God upon it; but in the Habitation of the Just, which is, Blessed by the Lord. We have had Parents, who have Pray'd for us, before they had us; as Abraham, as Hannah, did for theirs. Yea, perhaps upon their first Apprehensions of our Conception, they did solemnly Give us up to God, that we might be for ever possessed by His Holy Spirit as the Everlasting Vessels of His Glory. But how much then have the Prayers of these our Parents been concerned for us? And how Rich a Portion

have we had, in that Stock of Prayers? Little do Children think, what an Invaluable blessing it is, to have Parents, that as Job, Sacrificed for his, according to the Number of them all, do pray for every one of them, and that by Name, every Day! But more than so; we have had Parents, that have *Restrained* us, when our Corrupt Natures would have been Exorbitant; not Leaving us to be Children of *Pestil*, with an Indulgence like that of *Eli's*. We have had Parents, that have *Instructed* us, and caused us to become well Catechized in the Principles of the Divine of Christ; with a Diligence, like that of *Lazarus* and *Bathsheba*, for their *Solomon*. We have had Parents, that have even, *Travelling for us in Earth again*, that Christ might be Formed in us. And what a Favour of Heaven, have we had in the Heavenly Examples of such Parents! They have shewn us, *The Path of Life*, by their own Walking in that Path, before our Eyes. Let us Imitate their Seriousness, their Prayfulness, their Fruitfulness, their Holiness, their Watchfulness, and we shall at last, Arrive to *Elis*, being therin *Gathered unto our Fathers*. Whereas, most of the Children in the World, have Parents, by whose Influence they, *Go to the Generation of their Fathers, where they shall never see Light*. Yet, 'tis possible, that we have had Parents, who have *Liberally* brought us up; by their Cost and Care, we have been *Educated* in the *Sciences*, whereby we may be made singularly *Serviceable* to Mankind, singularly *Honourable* among our Neighbours. And I may add, That soms

some of us, who in our Childhood Lost our Parents, have yet found, that our God is the Father of the Fatherless : God has graciously stirr'd up others to do the part of Parents for us, when we were shittles Orphans To proceed,

The FOURTH Article in our Commemoration may be, The Benefits of God, relating to the PROVISION which Divine Providence has made for us and ours. Our Lord said once unto some of His Ministers, *When I sent you without Purse, Lacked ye any thing !* And they said, *Nothing.* Even we, whose Maintenance hath been Left unto the Arbitrary and Alterable Humours of a Fickle Multitude, and who perhaps have never made any Agreement with that Multitude about our Maintenance, yet have hitherto been strangely Supply'd in all our Straits. Many of our Neighbours, have but Impoverish'd Themselves, by not Communicating unto their Teachers in all good Things ; and if the Devils, who are the Rulers of this Dark World, could have had their Wills, we must have been Beggared, been Farnished. Yet we have seen, that we have Served a Good Lord : He has, as for the Tribe of Levi, *Clapp'd our Substance*; and He has been a Shepherd that would not suffer us His Under Shepherds to Want. But have not all our Faithful People also, had the like Experiences ? Agurs Wih, has been granted us ; even, *Food convenient for us.* I.e., how many of us may say, That we never did properly Want, one good Meal, ever since we drew our first Breath ? Speaking of our God, we may say with our Father Jacob, *He*

is the God, that has fed me all my Life Long, unto this Day. And what has been our Meat? our Drink? our Lodging? Have we not had for Delight, and Splendor, as well as for Necessity? It may be some of us, once had but very Little in the World; nevertheless as Jacob said, *Once I had no more than my Staff in my Hands, and now I am become two Rents;* thus, when we began the World, we were hardly worth so much as the Heads of the Cane which we now carry in our Hands; whereas we are now Risen to, how much of Grandeur! Thus have we been Supported. And, How Affiduoufly? We may say, *The Lords Mercies are New every Morning.* How Seasonably? We have seen, When being Poor and Needy we have sought Water, the Lord has given it. Indeed, our God has from Day to Day, carried us along as He did His Israel in the Wilderness. We could scarce foresee sometimes one Day a-forsyth, how we should be Relieved for the Next; but our Heavenly Father has as well Answered, as Understood, our Exigencies.

To Go on,

The FIFTH Article in our Commemoration may be, The Benefits of God, relating to the FRIENDS, by the Beltswal whereof, God Almighty has befriended us. When men have been annoy'd by Adversaries, it has been said, *God Raised them up those Adversaries.* And shall not we that have such Friends as we have, Acknowledge that they are of Gods Raising for us? But there are especially our Friends of two Ranks, wherein we have been marvel-

lously favoured by the God who sets the *Sectary* in Families. First, Our *Consorts*. Haye we not had such WIVES, as may be truly called Good things, whose in we have obtained Favour from the Lord? "It is possible, we did in the Solemnit manner, like Isaac, Ask them of God, before we had them; and now tho' t'other Day, they were mere strangers unto us, we do, as we have cause, value them above all the Relations that we have in the world, besides; and we do every Day that we live in the world, give our particular thanks to Heaven for our being so happily Accommodated. We have *Consorts*, whose Good nature, whose Discretion, Doubles all our joys, and halves all our Sorrows: *Consorts*, who Live with us as the *Heirs of Life*, and give us a fit help, in our pursuing of that Inheritance; *Consorts*, who are not a continual Dropping to us, as *Jobs* was to him, or as *Abigail* was to her. We had been the *Undaunted* of men, if we had been so mated, as we have seen some, who have been thus *undone*, and could not *undo* what had in this thing been once done. And then Our *Children*. It is said, *Lo, Children are an Heritage of the Lord*. And how, Rich, have some of us, been in our *Heritage*! Children we have had, that have been comely, that have been witty, that have been well Disposed. We have had *Children*, and God has not fulfilled His threatening upon us, *Tho' they bring up Children, yet will I bereave them*. *Ibzan* the Judge of *Israel*, had thirty Sons, and thirty Daughters; and the Jews have a Tradition that he buried them all, before he Died himself;

himself: *We have not been Bereaved.* We have had Children, and they have not been like Esau's, *A Grief of Mind unto us*, but our Support, and our Glory. We may produce them, as the Roman Lady did *Hers*, for the most valuable of all our Jewels. To add,

The SIXTH Article in our *Commemoration* may be, The *Benefits* of God, relating to the *Earthly VOCATIONS* and *EMPLOYMENTS*, which *Heaven* has cast upon us. 'Tis a *Blessing* to have a *Calling*. Tho' our *Sweat* be mentioned in our *Curse*, yet our *Curse* would be far greater than it is, if it were not for our *Sweat*. 'Tis many wayes *Advantageous*, both for our inward and our outward Man, that we should, with *quietnes* work, & *Eat our own bread*. Let it be enquired of us, as it was of the Sons of *Jacob*, *Of what Occupation are you?* We have an Occupation; and *Blessed be God*, it is not only a *Lawful* but a *Gainful* Occupation. It was the Benediction upon the Tribe of *Judah*, *Let his Hands be sufficient for him*. Since we are of this Tribe, let us indeed be found in the Tribe of *Judah*, or of *Praising* ones. But more than this; we have an *Agreeable* Occupation. 'Tis no little kindness of our God unto us, when we come to love, to like, to choose our daily *Business*; when our *Business* is made our *pleasure*, and we do not come to it, as the Bear unto the Stake. The Lord said, *Bebold, I have created the Smib, who blows the Coals in the Fire, and bringeth forth an Instrument for his Work*. Thus 'tis God that *Spirits one man for this Work*, and *ano-*

another man for that work ; and when a mans lot falls to him in that Work, whereto he has been particularly Spirited, this is the kind work of God. And that which Augments this kindness of God, is, that we can so follow the work of our calling, as to mentain ourselves, and yet we have Time to mind the affairs of our Souls too ; we can without pinching, allow one whole Day in a week, for soul-work ; and be at *Lectures & Meetings* every week, for more of that work : & every Day in our *Houses*, and *Closets*, do something further at that work ; and so, *Work out our own salvation*. Yea, some of us, have an Honourable Vocation also : We have either in the *Government*, or in the *Ministry*, such a station that many thousands may fare the better for us ! These are thing that call for the most grateful Resentments of our Souls. But then.

The SEVENTH Article in our Commemoration may be, The *Benefits* of God, relating to the Marvellous PRESERVATIONS which have been afforded us, by the Glorious *Preserver of men*. Have not our Lives been fill'd with *Preservations*, by Him that is, *The Keeper of Israel*? Yea, We have been preserved from *Sin*. What if we had been Left unto our selves? We should soon have been so many *Devils Incarnate*. When the Holy Bradford heard of any Wickedness committed in the Neighbourhood, he would say, *Alas, In this Heart of mine, there is that which would cause me to commit the Like Wickedness, if God should give me up to my own Heart*. Thus, we may see prodigies of

of Wickedness in the world ; but we must ascribe it unto the pure Grace of our God, that we also are not such Ruined and Rueful Creatures. Especially, considering what Futious Assaults of Temptation have been made upon us : For it is indeed probable, that most of us, have at some times undergone more violent Assaults of Temptation, whereof we may say, *My Feet were almost gone, my steps had well nigh stopt.* Had not the Good God strangely and strongly, kept us back, at those Times, we had undoubtedly cast our selves over the most Irrecoverable Precipices ; but here was the Goodness of God, who would not *Suffer us to be Tempted above what we are Able :* 'tis He that may now Remind us, *I withdrew thee from finning against me.* And we have been preserved from Sorrow too. We have had that word fulfilled unto us, *The Lord shall preserve thee from all Evil, the Lord shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in.* Pause here, a little, I beseech you ; How many Sickneses have we Escaped ? Either the Diseases never touch'd us, or, like *Hezekiah*, and *Epaphroditus*, we have been Restored from them. How many Casualties, have we also E- vaded ? Let the *Traveller*, Let the *Marriner*, Let the *Soldier* now Enumerate his Deliverances. One that Received a great Fall from an Horse, but Received no Hurt by the Fall, said of it, *I never had such a Deliverance in my Life ;* but one well Reply'd, *Yea, Sir, you have, as often as you Rode without Falling at all.* This I say, Our Deliverances have been far from Inconsiderable, even then, when

when we have not had Sentible and Imminent Hazards to signalize them unto our Consideration. In a word, we have been surrounded with Evil Angels on every side of us, every day ; and those Devils have always been Watching, Waiting, Snatching, to Devour us. But our God has muzzled those Hungry Lions ; and has granted us a guard of Good Angels, whose Ministry has been useful to us, in many Thousands of God Offices, whereof we shall never be exactly advized, until we are Translited into their Innumerab: Company. And yet this is not all !

The EIGHTH Article in our Commemoration may be the Benefits of God, relating to the Evident ANSWERS of our PRAYERS, by the Merciful Hearer of Prayer. May not you and I make this Relation, *This poor man has cry'd unto the Lord, & the Lord has heard and sav'd !* Cannot we look upon one enjoyment, and say, *This is a Naphtali, I wrestled with my God for this, and so I obtained it !* Can we not look upon another enjoyment, and say, *This is a Samuel, I asked it of my God, and so I had it !* When Distresses have been upon ourselves, we have gone to our God, and having Offered up our Prayers and Supplications, we have been Heard in what we feared. And when distresses have been upon others, perhaps we have like Abraham, like Moses, like Samuel, and like David, and like Isaiah, prevailed for the Removal of them. A Minister of the Gospel, 'tis probable may see the Faces of some Scores in his Congregation, of whom he may say, *God gave that Scul from death*

to my poor unworthy prayers ! Yea, 'tis possible the very Devils have not been able to stand before our Prayers; our Prayers have perhaps more than thrice dispossessed the Devils, who had seized upon some of our Afflicted Neighbours. Let me tell you ; Psalms to bring unto Remembrance, are to keep us from forgetting the Returns of our Prayers ! But further yet ;

The NINTH Article in our Commemoration may be, The Benefits of God, relating to the Means of our SANCTIFICATION, and the Success of those Means. Let us now Declare unto ourselves, and so make ourselves Ready to Declare unto others, What the Lord has done for our Souls. That we have the Means of Grace, is a thing that lays us under Adamantine Obligations unto Thankfulness. Have we, The Word, the Statutes, the Judgments, of God thrown unto us ? What should follow, but Praise ye the Lord ! For indeed, He hath not so dealt with every Nation. Yea, But has Grace it self also been convey'd unto us, by these means ? This does make our Obligations unto Thankfulness to become truly Infinite. Has the Great God given his Own Son to us, and for us, and with him Freely given all things ? Are we Invited unto a Jesus, who saves his People from their sins ? A Jesus, who delivers from the wrath to come ? A Christ, in whom there does all fitness dwell ? O our Hallelujahs, where are you ? Indeed, we could never have come unto this Jesus without the Drawing of the Father. But has he drawn us ? Has the Spirit of God made it

it a Day of his Power with us, and have we been made willing, in that memorable Day? We were Dead in Treasures and Sins; Has the Spirit of God quickened us? We were *Guine astray in the greatness of our Folly*; is the Spirit of God Reduced us? We have been *Pining away in our Iniquities*; Have we been Recovered by the Sanctifying, the Strengthening, the Comforting Spirit of our God? O the Matchless loving kindness! And, pray, what are the Means which God has devised, for the bringing back of our Souls, which have been *Banished from His Paradise*? We have not only had the Ordinances of God, made useful unto us, for the changing of us into His Image, from *Glory to Glory*; but His Providences too. Even those very afflictions which have happened unto us, have not come only by *Hap*; there has been the Good Hand, and the Good End, of our God in all; and tho' we had been ready to say, *All these things are against me*, we now see, *That all things have wrought together for our Good*. We shall have cause to magnify the Name of our God forever, for the Restraints which he has laid upon us, by our *Afflictions*, and for the *Right Thoughts*, which our *Sad bours* have Raised in us. 'Tis by these *Means*, that we are now brought into the *Covenant of Grace*. And now, O most Highly Privileged we! The Great God is become our God. God the Father, is become our Father; God the Son, is become our Saviour; God the Spirit, is become our Strenghtener; All the Perfections of this God, are now concerned for our Welfare. We have now

a Title to all the Promises of God ; we may have a continual Recourse to them, as unto our *Heritage, and the Rejoicing of our Heart* ; we may from them assure our selves of *Grace, of Glory, of Every Good Being*. Our Spiritual *Enemies* will all be Disappointed ; we have an Omnipotent Undertaker for our being made *Conquerours and more than Conquerours over them*. And whither are we now a going ? Our Heavenly Shepherd is daily *Leading* of us *in the Paths of Righteousness* ; but whither ? Truly, to another and a better World ; Every Day we are one Day nearer to the *Inheritance of the Saints in Light*. We shall shortly, be with our Lord Jesus Christ, *Where He is, that we may Behold His Glory ! But, O my God, How Long ! How Long !*

Now, Are not here *Articles of Commemoration* enough to fill the Thoughts of one *Winter Day* ? And yet, that the Mufick may not be Impair'd by our missing of any *Note* that may belong unto it, annex a *TENTH Article* to all the Rest. Let *That* be, upon the *Benefits of God*, relating to the good *Circumstances* of the *Country*, whereof we are Inhabitants. Let the *Health*, the *Growth*, the *Peace*, the *Plenty* and the *Protection* of our *Country*, procure our Acknowledgments unto our God.

And so coming to the Close of a short *Winter Day*, spent in such Devotions, as will a little Resemble and Antedate the Heavenly Exercises of our *Long Eternity*, Let us break off with a few *Ingenuous Thoughts* upon that *Enquiry* of a *Thankful Soul*. *What shall I Render to the Lord for all His Benefits ? Or, What Special Service is*

there that I may Do for the God, whose Goodness and Mercy has followed me all my Days? Contrive, Resolve, and Execute accordingly. Behold, A Winter-Day well spent.

VI. However it may be, as to the Works of our Particular Calling, yet as to the Works of our GENERAL CALLING, we should not let the Winter be our Hindrance. Altho' we have a Seal'd Hand, as to our Temporal Affairs in the Winter, yet let us not then Deal with a slack Hand, as to our Spiritual. There is a Work that we have to do, in the Winter as well as in the Summer; and it is the Work of God. Salvation-work, is to be no small share of our Winter-work. Our Winter Prayers must not be, our Coldest ones, tho' 'tis in a Cold Air that we make them. Our Cares to make our Vocation and Election sure, are not excused by the Winter; That must not cool them. Tho' the work of Laying in for the Winter, be over with us; yet the work of Laying in for Eternity is not over; that is to be done all the Winter Long. The Word of God, that is to be Read, and to be Heard, as well as Obey'd, now no Less than formerly. The Psalmist has joyned those things, *The Lord gives the Snow, the Frost, the Ice, and, Hee shewed His Word unto Jacob.* Truly, the Snow, the Frost, the Ice, may not hinder us from the minding of that Word. There is the work of Watching and Fighting against our Invisible Adversaries; and this is to be done as much in the Winter, as at any Time whatever. Other Wars are ordinarily intermitted in the W^m 5

100, by the Armies then retiring to their Winter Quarters. But the Winter gives no Intermission unto these Wars of the Lord. In one of the Psalms, we read, *The Dragons, joyned with the Hail, and the Snow, and the Vapour* whereof these are composed. Why, when the Vapours of the Winter are about our Ears, we shall still have, *The Dragons*, alio to conflict withal. Tho' our other Snakes do all the Winter Ly Idle in their Holes, yet the Owl Serpent, is as busy then as ever: and we should then be as vigilant against the Spirits, who go about *Seeking whom they may Devour*. God make us, like the Valiant Benajah, who *flew a Lion in a Pit in a Snowy Day*!

Here is our work. But now for the Obstruction of this work in the Winter, there is a frequent Abuse of that Scripture, in Mat. 9. 12. *I will have Mercy and not Sacrifice*. The Deceitful Hearts of Men pretend the Duties of Mercy, to Plunge themselves into the most horrible Instances of Cruelty; I mean, they make themselves a Sacrifice to the terrible Justice and Vengeance of God. But I say, *Go ye, and Learn what that means*! It is true, That Mercy to our selves, may adjust the CIRCUMSTANCES of our Duties, or, the Extrours, in the AFFIRMATIVES of Religion. It is not pleasing to God, that we should be really Cruel to our selves. Gods Commands do not commonly oblige us to overthrow the Health of our own Bodies. We cannot be Righteous at all, except we Deny our selves; but when we come to Destroy our selves, by Excesses in the Manner of Doing, what must be Done, tho'

we should be Destroy'd for it, then we become Righteous Overmuch.

However, First, Let us keep close to this *Direction*; Tho' positive Commandments may be sometimes Invaded for the sake of *Mercy*, yet Negative Commandments may never be so. When we may do *Less* of that which is *Good*, yet we may do *Nothing* of what is *Il*. And then, Let us keep this *Distinction*; There is a Difference between *Ungrateful abatements*, and *Well-pleasing Omissions* of our Devotions on the score of *Mercy* pretended for. 'Tis one thing for us, to be compell'd against our Choice, unto the Diminution of our *Desired* and *Usual* Measure, in our pious Performances; and another, our Gladly accepting of an *Occasion*, that we hope, will set us at *Liberty*, from doing any thing at all.

It is complained, in *Prov. 20. 4.* *The Sluggard will not Plough by reason of the Cold*; or, of the *Winter*. Gods *Cold* is oftentimes made an *Excuse* for our *Sin*. Even so, The sluggish Hearts of men, will neglect thole Exercises of *Piety*, wherein we Plough for our Everlasting Welfare. Why so? Truly, 'tis the *Cold* of the *Winter* that hinders them. We read concerning Peter, that he was by the *Cold* hurried into the way of *Temptation*. It is said, in *Joh. 18. 18.* *They made a Fire of Coals, for it was Cold; and Peter stood and warmed himself*: and you know what follow'd! Now, 'tis by the *Cold* that we are often hurried into the way of *Transgression* too. As he *Dny'd* his *Lord*, partly thro' the Snares of the *Cold*; so

we often Forget our Lord, because the Cold makes us be where we should not be. They are not only those who fly to the Tavern in the Winter, and who there do pollute their Souls with Drinking, with Bad Company, with Foolish Talking, by the Fire-side, that sin by *reason of the Cold*; but it is also the fault of those, who by *reason of the Cold*, will not visit their own Closets, or the Assemblies of Good Men, or the Worship of God, as much as they can. If you think it enough, to stay at Home, on a Winter Day, and, as you say, Read a Chapter in Job, I pray, Let it be that Chapter, where Job is told, That the Messengers of God, the Interpreters of His Word, must be duly considered and consulted by those that would be delivered from going down to the Pit.

Well, But now, Let us by a sacred *Antiperistesis* take more pains for the Serving of God, in the Winter, than we did in the more Tolerable Seasons of the Year. Yea, and Let us do it with an Expectation, That the more Pains we take to attend the Service of God, the more will He Requite our Pains with such Incomes of Grace and perhaps of Joy, into our Souls, as will be better than the Merchandise of Silver, or the Gain of the finest Gold. The Apostle speaking of what he had Endured in Serving of God, says in 2 Cor. 11. 27. *I have been in Cold, and Nakedness.* It is Likely that he refers, to what is Reported, in Acts 28. 2. That they were Shipwrack'd upon Malta, and there, *The Barbarous People shew'd them no Litle*

the Kindness, and kindled a Fire, and Received them, because of the Cold. Yea, but our God, ordinarily calls none of us to Endure a Cold, so extreamly circumstanced. We are to know, That we are now in a State of Probation, as to our Bodies: if we now put our Bodies to necessary Trouble, in the Serving of God, and if now in our Bodies, we Endure Hardness, as Good Souldiers of Jesus Christ, we shall be Rewarded in the Glory of these Bodies, at the Resurrection of the just. For every pinch of Cold, whereto we have Exposed our Bodies, in the Serving of God, all the Winter Long, we shall be Recompenced in our Glory'd Bodies, when, *The Times of a Refreshing Coolness shall come, by the Presence of the Lord.* Wherefore, now Let us do the more Works of PIETY, rather than the Fewer, for the Cold of our Winter. It is noted concerning the Time of our Lords Coming up to the House of God, in Joh. 10. 22, 23. It was the Feast of the Dedication, and it was Winter; And Jesus walked in the Temple. It may be that yet have never yet given up your selves unto the Blessed God, with so Explicit a Dedication, as would be an less Comfortable, than Reasonable Service. Then do it this Winter; while you have so much Time to Dedicate unto such a Service. But having so done, Be sure to come up unto the Temple, in the Winter, as much as ever you can. Possibly, you have never yet come into any Evangelical CHURCH-FELLOWSHIP, according to the Precept of the Holy JESUS; No, you are so far from Walking with Him, in the Temple, that you never yet En-

ted into His *Temple*, of Believers Associated for the Designs of the *Gospel*! I say then, **LET THIS WORK BE DONE BEFORE THIS WINTER BE OUT**. Having first Given your selves unto God in Christ, with *Full purpose*, To be *for Him, and not for another*, then Give your selves unto some *Holy Society* of His People, that *Worship Him* according to the *Order of the Gospel*. I pray, Let the Lord *this winter*, see you in His *TEMPLE*.

Yea, Whatever *work* we have to do for our *Souls*, let not the *Winter* give any *Supersedeas*, to our *Working out of our own Salvation*. *Jacob* thro the *Love of Rachel*, could *Encounter* more than a Little *Winter*, for more than One *Seven Years* together; said he, in *Gen. 31. 40*. *In the Day the Drought, and the Frost by Night consumed me*. The sudden Changes from *Heat* unto *Cold*, like those in our own Country, it seems did sometimes bring *Burning Fevers* and *Agues* upon the Patriarch! But shall not we be *willing* to do as much for our own *Souls*? O patiently undergo a Little *Frost*, for the sake of their *Deliverance*, from the *Outer Darkness*, where there is *Gnashing of Teeth*, for ever! Ecclesiastical History, has Embalmed the Memory of several *Martyrs*, who chose the *Fiery Anguish* of being *Frozen unto Death*, rather than they would *Sin* against God, and incur the *Fire of Damnation*. Methinks, 'twould *Fire the Coldest Heart* imaginable, to read the *Elegant Orations* of the *Eloquent Ancients*, in the *Commendation* of thols Renowned *Martyrs*! And shall

shall we then think much sometimes to feel our selves a little VVinterish, while we are doing the Things that must be done, for our Getting out of our Sin, and for our Communion with that Lord who Saves His People from their Sins.

In fine, Let us Get into our Hearts, an *Heat of Love* to God, that will carry us easily thro' all the *Cold* of the VVinter in the Serv-
ing of God. Of *Love*, 'tis said, in Cant. 8. 7. *Many waters cannot quench Love, neither can the floods drown it.* Of this *Love*, I may say, *Many VVinters cannot starve it, neither can the Frost Nip it.* Said the Apostle, *The Love of Christ constraineth us.* Altho' they that would suitably Serve God in the *winter*, must meet with many Difficulties; yet if we had this *Love* in us, that would *Constrain us, to Go, Freely through them all.*

VII. There are many *works* of **CHARITY**, whereto the Rigours and Horrors of a *sharp winter*, may *sharp*en our Inclinations; and we should then *effectually Demonstrate* our being there-
to Inclined. There are those which are Em-
phatically called, **GOOD WORKS**; altho' we have a *Scal'd Hand* in the *winter*, yet we should not then have a *close Fist*, for such *works* as those. To Believe and Support the *Poor*, is the *work of God*; and Let us now *Know*, what it is to *Do*, as much as we can of that *work*. The charitable *Job*, could say, in chap. 30. 24. *VWas not my*

Soul griev'd for the Poor? Why, Altho' we have an abundance of all things about us, yet our winters are very pinching and piercing Things unto us; well, but now Let us think on the Poor, that sit shivering over a *Widow's Fire*! that are but thin clad, and worse Fed, and have those two Powerful Things, *Winter and Poverty*, at once falling, like *Armed men* upon them. O think on these Poor Ones, till our Souls are duly Grieved for them. Let not our *Charity* be as *Cold* as the *winter*; and Let none of us contribute unto the fulfilling of that Prophecy, in Mat. 24. 12. *The Love of many shall wax cold.* Yea, suppose our *Charity* were as *cold* as the *water*, yet Let it be like the *water* for this one thing more; the *water* in the *winter* will *Expend* and *Extend* it self unto almost an *Eighth part* of the *Space* it possessed before; and this with such a *Force*, as to *Burst* the very *Substance* of even *Metaline Vessels*, which would have *kept* it in. May nothing now *Obstruct* such a *Spread* of our *Charity*!

It is mentioned, as the Lamentable Condition of some, in Job 14. 7. *They have no Covering in the Cold.* I beseech you, Let our *Liberality Cover* those that are so miserable: and therefore Let us *Devise Liberal Things.* But now I speak of such *Devizing*, there is one charitable proposal, which you shall permit me to urge upon you. 'Tis this, *When winter is coming on, & our winter-stock of Necessaries is Laying in, Let us then seriously consider with ourselves, Who of my Neighbours are there that want my Charity? & Let us LIBERALLY divide among them*

them fit Proportions of the same Stores, that we Lay up for our selves; or otherwise Enable them to Lay up something of the Like Stores for their Sucour in the Necessities of the Advancing VVinter.

This I am sure of; that all our Accommodations all the winter long, will be very much the Sweeter, if not also the Surer, unto us, for our having first Liberally Imparted a Share unto our Honest Neighbours, that were altogether Destitute of such Accommodations. We read, in a certain place, concerning, *The Treasures of Snow*. One of the Ancients does expound those Treasures to be, *Worldly Riches* which the next Shower of Calamity will wash away, like a *Snow-Drift*, and leave only some *dirt*, behind in the owners heart. Why, if we would not have our *Treasures*, to melt, and wast, like those of the *Snow*, employ those *Treasures* for the Consolation, of the miserable, whose miseries are encreased by the *Snow*.

CHRISTIANS, If you answer your *Worthy Name*, both the Word of CHRIST and the Day of CHRIST, find awful Resentments with you. Well then; You are in that *Word* Informed, and Assured, with what Glories in that *Day*, all your GOOD WORKS will be acknowledged. This *Winter*, feed a Starving Neighbour, and a sensible Jesus will then say, *I am feasted*. And the effect of it will be, that he will invite you to the *Fat things* of *His House*, yea, to the *Delicious Feast*, which he has in *His Eternal Mountain*. Again, This *Winter* Lodge an Harbourless Neighbour, and a sensible Jesus will say, *I am entertained*. You will not only

ly, like some, Entertain Angels *unawares*, but, *The Lord of Angels*, Himself. Further, This *Winter* clothe a Naked Neighbour, and a sensible Jesus will say, *I have Robes put upon me*. 'Twil be as if you had Adorned the Temples of God. Moreover, This *Winter* Comfort a Sick Neighbour, and a sensible Jesus will say, *Tis I that am Refreshed*. So, you that have Considered the Poor shall have your own *Beds* turned by the Lord for you, in your own *Sickness*. Finally, This *Winter*, come to a Neighbour in *Prison*, and you'll come to a sensible Jesus there. What you do for the *Redemption* of Captives, will be done to the Great *Lord-Redeemer*. They are the worst of *Misers*, whom such Motives, will not persuade unto somewhat of *Liberality*! But behold, the *Winter* it self also comes in as one of our *Motives*. The wise man said in Eccl. 11 2. *Give a portion to seven, and also to eight, for thou knowest not, what evil shall be upon the Earth*. Yea, but now the *winter*, is coming, we do know much of the *Evil* that will then be upon the *Earth*, and let us therefore give a *portion* of our *Supplies* unto as many as we can.

It would be a sad thing, if we should in the *winter* be driven out of our *Habitations*. Our Lord has allow'd us to deprecate very heartily, *A flight from our Houses in the winter*: and for the same cause, *A fire on our houses in the winter*, deserves as warm a Deprecation. Well, the way for us to preserve our *Houses*, is to make *Berbes-
da's* of them, that is *Houses of Mercy*, to the poor.

Let

Let our Houses, be Alms-Houses, and we may hope, that inasmuch as we thus Fear God, He will neither Cut off our dwellings, nor Cut off us from our dwellings. Olaus Magnus admires the Lake, near the Metropolis of Norway, whose veins of Sulphur under it, keep it from any Congelation in the Coldest Winter of that Northern Climate : may the wonders of that Lake, be emulated, by the perpetual warmth of our Charity.

VIII. And now to have done ; Let the Cold of the winter, very powerfully warm our hearts to shake off that SINFUL COLD, which has gained upon our Hearts. To Recover any Frozen part of the Body with safety, the way is to Rub it with Snow. Give me leave now to rub somewhat of the winter upon you, for the Recovery of your Frozen Souls. Indeed, There is a Coolness of Spirit, which would be the wisdom of the man that has it. So we read in Prov.17.27. *A man of understanding is of an Excellent Spirit* : some read it, *Of a Cool Spirit*. It would indeed render us, *The excellent in the earth*, to have a Spirit free from those Heats which the most of men are by provocations thrown into. A Cool Spirit, is a meek Spirit ; and we should Labour for such a Spirit, not only under Afflictions from the Hand of God, but under Injuries from the Hand of Man also. Of such a Cool Spirit, was the Great Moses generally under all the Murmurings, the Reproaches, and the Froward Humours of his Congregation ; and of such a Spirit, I am to tell you, *Tis in the fighs of God, of great Price*. But then, There is a Coldness of Spirit, against

against which we should be always *Awake*; and particularly, in the *Cold* of the *winter* be *Awakened*.

FIRST, There is the *Cold* of our **FORMALITY**, against which we should now fortify our Souls. *Formality*, lies in much *Cold* mixed with some *Warmth*; it lies in some Kindness for the Thing that *God* is; over born with predominant Regards unto the world. This *Lukewarmness*, is that Abominable Indifferency about, *The Kingdom of Heaven*, wherewith our Lord says of them that have it, *I will spue them out of my mouth*. But it is Required in Rom. 12. 11. *Be Fervent in Spirit serving the Lord*: It may be rendred, *Be Boiling Hot, in it*. There are some *Well* that *Boil* all the year about, and that seem rather *Hotter* in the *winter* than in the rest of the year. Even so should it be with us, as to that principle within us, which is, *A well of water springing up to Everlasting Life*. There is a *Zeal*, wherewith we should pursue all our Everlasting Interests; and as the *Fire* burns fiercest in the *winter*, so the *Cold* of the *winter* should be but adding *fire* unto our *Zeal*. Our other Occupations are interrupted by the *winter*; yea, but let us now, be more Lively than ever, in our Spiritual *Husbandry*, and in *Ploughing up the Fallow Ground of our Hearts*. Let us now be more Lively than ever, in our Spiritual *Merchandise*, and in Bartering for the *Pearl of Great Price*. Let us now, be more lively than ever, in our Spiritual *Building*; even, in *Building up ourselves, &c* one another, in our most *Holy Faith*.

'Tis true, we have *Hearts*, that are as *Cold as a Stone*, when they should be concerned about the Things of another World ; yet there is a way to help it : Let us Cry to our God, who says, in Ezek 36. 26, 27. *I will take away the Heart of Stone ; yet for this I will be Enquired of, to do it.*

But then, **SECONDLY**, There is the *Cold* of our **UNREGENERACY** to be rescued wherefrom, the Desires, the Wishes of our Souls are to be exceeding *Ardent*. In the Travels of *Israel*, we read much about, *The Wilderness of Sin* ; which is in English, *The Wilderness of Cold*. Why, to speak nothing but English, All you that are in, *The Wilderness of Sin*, are in a *Cold Wilderness* indeed ; a *Wilderness* of Deadly, yea, of Damning, and *Alas* ! for you, that you don't yet count it, *Insufferable Cold* ! It was the Gladsome Song, in Can. 2.11. *Lo, The Winter is past, the Rain is over and gone.* What is that *Winter*? It has been Interpreted for the, *Tempus præcedens Vocationem* ; the Time while we are yet in our *Unregeneracy*. O that all you, with whom it is yet such a Time, of *Winter*, might before this *winter* be out, be able to Sing, *The Winter of my Unbelief is past, my Sin is over and gone !* The Excellent *Bartholomæus* hath remarked it ; That the Bodies of them who are kill'd in the *Winter*, use to be found, in just the same *Features*, and *Postures*, that were upon them, when they Received their mortal *Wounds* : they are found *Gaping*, *Staring*, *Frowning*, and with their *Hands Extended*, just as they were in their fatal Fall. Truly, so, if you Dy in this *Winter* of your *Unregeneracy*.

generacy, those Impressions of Sin upon your Spirits, wherein you Dy, will become Eternally Indelible and Unalterable. You'l be as it were Irrecoverably Congealed into such an Ungodly Temper, as that wherein you do Expire; Incurable will be your Antipathy to God, and your Prejudice against all that is Holy, and Just and Good. So, Interminable Torments and Regrets, will become in some sort Essential to your to-laken Souls; and you will be Confirmed in the Natural Consequents of Enmity to God, world without End; where the Almighty—*Cobibet, mirabile dictu,*

Eternam fiammis Glaciem, Eternoque Rigore
Ardentes borrent Scupuli.

[What *Silius* writes about the Top of Burning *Etna.*] Would it not be a most Irksome Thing to have a perpetual *Winter* upon us? But let all *Unregenerates* know, That it is always *winter* with them. Consider this, Consider whether you have not the signs of the world *winter*, in the World upon you. The Cold of the *winter* does make things to become *Uncertain*. As *Cold*s and the like Instruments will not Go in the *winter*; even the very Metal of them sometimes is thereby distended so that their Teeth lose their *Congruity*; thus the Owners are sufficiently *Littless* too. And are not you so? You can't *Come*, no; nor so much as *Look*, to the Lord Jesus Christ, for *Life*, tho' the Life of your Souls depend upon it. You can't *Walk* with God, or *Move* with any Activity, much less, can you *Run* with an *Enlarged Heart* in the *Way of His Commandments*. Again, The Cold of

the

the winter does make things to become *Insensible*. They who Dy of the Cold, after their *Hands* and *Feet* are throughly siezed, often grow past feeling; and fall into a *Letbargie Drowsiness*, wherein and whereof they are like to Dy Irrecoverably. And are not you so? You don't *Hear*, the Calls of the *Gospel*, tho' the Loudest *Thunders*, are not so loud as the voice of that *Silver-Trumper*. You don't *See* the *Beauty* of your *Saviour*, tho' He be *Altogether Lovely*. You don't *feel* the Load of your *Sins*, tho' that Infinite Load, be heavier than *Talents*, and Mount-ins of *Lead* upon your *Souls*. Is there not a *Dead Sleep* upon yo. ? Once more, The *Cold* of the *winter* brings *Putrefaction* with it. Tho' whilst *Bodies* continue *Frozen*, the *Cold* by *arresting* those *Particles*, from whole *Tumultuary Motions* *Corruption* uses to proceed; may keep the *Ill Operations* of the *Cold* upon the violated *Textures* of *Bodies*, from appearing; so *Dead Bodies* in *Greenland* have been prelvered thirty years entire from *Rottleness*; yet when once that is *remov-ed*, they commonly and speedily discover how much their *Texture* had been *vitiated* by the *Cold*. And, are you *Free* from That? Why then have you such *Rotten Communications*? and such *Rotten Imaginations*? Why are you so much like *Open Sepulcres*? And now what mean you, ye *Unrege-nrates*, that you are not yet weary of this wretched *winter*? Even solid *Marbles* have sometimes bin broken by the *Cold*; O let it break thy *Rocky Heart*, when thou thinkest of the *Cold*, wherein it is *Bewimbered*.

It was the Occasional Reflection of a Young Disciple, in a bitter cold Morning.

[See the Life of my Brother, *Nath. Mather*, p. 40.]

‘ Jan. 8. Being about to Rise, I felt the *Cold* in a manner Extraordinary; which inclined me to seek more *warmth* in my Bed,, before I Rose: But so extream was the *Cold*, that this was not feasible, whereupon I Resolved to *Dress* my self without any more ado, and so going to the *Fire* in my Clothes, I soon became warm enough. Turn this, O my *Soul*, into an useful Meditation. There is a Necessity of my Rising out of my *Bed*, the *Bed* of *Security*, which I am under the power of; and to *Live* unto Christ, and *walk in the Light*. In order hereunto, I must *put on* my *Soul*, the *Garments*, which are to be had from the Lord Jesus. Now, to Awaken me out of my *Sleep*, & my *Security*, I am to set before me the *Sun*; the *Gospel* of, *The Sun of Righteousness*, doth Enlighten my mind, and tell me, that I was before, muddled up in *Darkness*, and that if I continued therein, I should *starve* and perish. I am also taught,, That when men are *Convinced* of their miserable Condition, they will rather Endeavour to Ease and Comfort and *Cheare* themselves, by something in *Themselves*, than put on the *Spiritual Garments*, which the Lord Jesus Christ has provided for them. An *Evil* to be, by me *Avoided*!

O that all our *Young Ones*, would argue at such a rate. You think of putting off your *Conversion*, till *Old Age*. Fond Souls: Besides the horrible Danger,

Danger, wherein you are, of being like those Who Dy in Youth, because their Life is among the Unclean: This were just as if you should put off, all the Busyness of the Summer, until the Depth of Winter. say now, in the midst of winter, say, vain Youths, whether you could subsist, if you had no Bread, but what this Winter were now to be Sow'd or Planted; and no Money, but what were now to be Labour'd for? It must be nothing but, *A Madness in the Heart*, that can encourage you, to Delay your Conversion, till the Winter of Old Age do overtake you. O do not so play the Gras-bopper; but hear Counsil, and, *Go to the ant thou Sluggard!* For persons to be Cold, Key-cold, yea, Death cold, about the matters of their Souls, while they are in their Youth, and think that they will use more warm Endeavours about those matters in their Age; This truly, is a far odder thing than the Quality of that Fountain of Debris.

*Frigore qui noctis fervet Calefactus & Umbris,
At Solis friget Radijs Glacialis et Iggi.*

‘ Tis Cold at High Noon, & Warm at Midnight.

And then, sirs they that are already come to Old Age, had need make sure of Conversion, before it become altogether too late, hopeless, helpless, & unattainable. My Fathers, you are now got into the winter of your Lives; Old Age begins to Snow upon your heads; & your whole face is that of the earth in winter. The Jews generally interr'd their Dead under an Oak: [see 1Sam.21.13.] pleased perhaps with some such parallel as this; that as the Tree seeming-
ly dead in the winter, had every Spring an Annual
and

and Notable *Resurrection*, so the Dry *Bones* of men, shall have a new Sap of *Life* infused into them, at the Day of Judgment. Indeed, you that are under the Decays of Age, are like the *Tree* casting off its Leaves in Autumn, every thing is now apace *dying* with you every day ; you'll wither, till your being sunk into the ground make it a perfect *winter* with you. You shall have a *Resurrection* ; but O tis high Time for you, to gain a good Assurance, that it shall be, *The Resurrection of Life*, and not, *The Resurrection of Damnation* ; in a word, That nothing may succeed, but *An Eternal Spring*. The Philosopher laid, *Before Old Age, my care was to Live well ; but now under Old Age, my care is to Dy well*. Truly, Now *winter* is come, you have nothing else to take any Care about. If you have not in all this while, Secured a saving Interest in the Lord Jesus Christ, or if you are not yet Purged from your old *Sins*, most horrid and monstrous has been your *Impenitency* ! And yet I am to tell you a very Glorious Thing ; That Interest may still be Secured. There was once a pretty Old man in some Distress, and it is laid, in Joh. 5. 6. *Jesus knew he had been a Long Time ill, and said unto him, Wilt thou be made Whole ?* Even so, The Lord Jesus Christ comes this Day, to you, Old men, that have been a *Long Time* in your *Sins*, and says, *Old man, shall I yet be the Saviour of thy Soul ?* O then with Conquered and Consenting Souls, now give your selves unto that Glorious Lord. But know, That if you do it not, before the *winter* of *This Year*, as well as of *Your Age*, be out, it will probably never be done at all. And then, alas.

alas, you will Expire, accursed like a Sinner of a
Hundred Years Old.

Unto *All*, I say, God forbid, this winter should pass before you have made your *Peace* with Him. And, To Excite you hereunto; As in some Wintry Countreys, the Carpenters must *Thaw* their Wood, before they can *Cut* it; Let me assay to *Thaw* your Hearts, in order to a better shaping and squaring of them. I say then, Consider that FIRE, as well as that Cold, which the Almighty God has to punish the Litolobedient. It has been said, *Who can stand before His Cold?* But it has also been said, *Who can stand before His Fire?* Thus, in Isa. 33. 14. *Who among us can dwell with the Devouring Fire? who among us shall dwell with Everlasting Burnings?* We wonder at the strength of the *Ice*, when we see a piece of it, near three inches broad and a quarter of an inch thick, laid over a frame three inches distant, bear a weight of near twenty pounds, for a long while together: as Mr *Boyl* Experienced: or when we read *Olaus Magnus* affirming, That their Septentrional *Ice*, is of such a Tenacity, that when 'tis two or three fingers thick it will bear an Armed man upon it; & when three or four Hands thick, vall Armies will venture over it, for their *Winter-Wars*. But thy Heart, O man, is prodigiously harder than a piece of *Ice*, if besides the weight of Sin upon it, it can bear the Thought of the *Fire that never shall be quenched*. Remember, The Wrath of God, like a Formidable *Fire*, will at last, with Exquisite Agonies, and Anguishes, Torture the Soul of them, that shall *Dy* in their

Unto you

Unregeneracy One that felt some flashes of that Fire, in the Troubles of his Conscience, hearing of some speaking about, *Burning to Death*, cry'd out, *O That is but a Metaphor to what I Endure!* And another that was broiling in the Fire of such Troubles, Roared in this manner, *O might I have this mitigation of my Troubles, to ly as a Backlog in the Fire on the Hearth, for a thousand Ages!* I urge this: when you are by the Fire-side, this *Winter*, think seriously with your selves, *Could I bear to Rest in this Fire?* *Alas, This is but a painful Fire, to that wherein God will take vengeance on them that Know Him not, and that Obey not His Gospel?* *And if I can't bear the Metaphor, me, not so much as for a minute, How then shall I bear to remain under the Wrath of God in Hell for infinitely more millions of Ages, than all the Fires on Earth, have made Ashes in the world?* And *O Let your Hearts be Troubled by such Considerations, this winter immediately to mourn for, and turn from all your Sins, and Give your selves to God in Christ, by a Covenant never to be forgotten.* It is a work of God, that is done *After the winter is over*, whereof there is mention, in Psalm 104. 30. *Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, and thou Renewest the Face of the Earth.* *O that such a work as this may be done upon you, while this winter is running; Send forth thy Spirit, O most Glorious Lord, and now Renew the Hearts of them that have hitherto continued Unregenerates!*

In fine, I now Leave these my poor Labours, in the Hands of that Eternal Spirit, with my Humblest Supplications, That these my Endeavours, may be made Profitable and Acceptable unto His People, and assist my Neighbours in their Travels to that Country, where the *Winter* shall for ever Cease from Troubling, and the *Wearie* be at Rest.

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